# DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 216 796 PS 012 883

| | |
|---|---|
| AUTHOR | Dorr, Aimee; And Others |
| TITLE | An Evaluation of NBC's 1980-81 Prosocial Children's Programming: Drawing Power, Play Alongs, How to Watch TV. |
| INSTITUTION | University of Southern California, Los Angeles. Annenberg School of Communications. |
| PUB DATE | 13 May 81 |
| NOTE | 394p. |
| EDRS PRICE | MF01/PC16 Plus Postage. |
| DESCRIPTORS | Age Differences; *Childhood Attitudes; Children; *Childrens Television; Commercial Television; Consumer Education; *Instructional Materials; Interviews; *Learning Activities; Pilot Projects; Program Evaluation; *Programing (Broadcast); Questionnaires; Television Research; *Television Viewing |
| IDENTIFIERS | National Broadcasting Company |

ABSTRACT

Reported in this document are findings from an evaluation of three kinds of prosocial children's programming broadcasted by the NBC network during the 1980-81 season. The prosocial programmings evaluated were "Drawing Power," "Play Alongs," and "How to Watch TV". The primary goals of the study, as stated by NBC, were to evaluate the appeal and impact of these programmings on young children (ages 5 to 12 years), and to obtain additional ideas about prosocial programming for the 1981-82 season. Following a brief introductory overview of the study, sections II, III, and IV present the results obtained for each of the above programmings. Each section begins by describing the prosocial programming being evaluated and the particular appeal and impact of the programming addressed. This is followed by a description of the methods used, a presentation of the results, and a short summary. Section V of the report describes pilot research, conducted by the second author as a pilot study for her doctoral dissertation, on how children think and feel about prosocial programming. The report ends with a brief general discussion of this study's findings and their importance for network Saturday morning prosocial programming. Copies of the various instruments used to collect data are included in appendices A to N. (MP)

***********************************************************************
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
***********************************************************************

ED216796

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☒ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

# AN EVALUATION OF NBC'S 1980-81 PROSOCIAL CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING:

## DRAWING POWER

## PLAY ALONGS

## HOW TO WATCH TV

Submitted By

Aimée Dorr, Catherine Doubleday, Peter Kovaric, and Dale Kunkel

Annenberg School of Communications

University of Southern California

May 13, 1981

PS012883

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Aimee Dorr

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our research has been aided and abetted by many people. At NBC, Horst Stipp was always there to provide information and guidance. Phyllis Tucker Vinson always answered questions, asked provocative ones herself, and generously provided help by her staff when necessary. Sam Ewing oversaw the taping of Drawing Power and Flintstones Comedy Show episodes and sent us format information about the Flintstones. Rebecca Weinstein related messages and matériel. Obviously, our work would have been more difficult without all this assistance.

At the Annenberg School we were fortunate to obtain constant and cheerful service from many people. Steve Brecht, Bill Darst, and Karen Stewart all helped arrange equipment, tape programming off the air, and copy tapes. Carolyn Spicer also helped with equipment in one or two emergencies. Robert Wang guided us through the financial bureaucracy maze at USC. Janice Dorr, Kim Lakoduk, Amy Phillips, Larry Podell, Claudia Puig, and Homa Sarchar all served as able and dependable research assistants. Finally, Agnes Uy served unstintingly with great competence and good humor as typist, copyist, collater, organizer, and everything else. Research would never have been conducted and a final report never transmitted to NBC without the contributions of all these people.

Lastly, we most gratefully recognize the willing assistance provided by so many children, siblings, parents, parent surrogates, principals, directors, teachers, afterschool care staff, secretaries, and custodians. Their participation made it possible to recruit participants, to find space in which to conduct the research itself, and/or to have data to analyze.

We obviously cannot name everyone who helped us in these ways, but we would like to acknowledge the directors, principals, and head teachers of the several places in which we conducted the research and/or from which we recruited research participants: Georgette Alling, Bertram Ashe, Mark Chou, Arlene Glassner, Margaret Jones, and Mary Stilwell. Without them we could not have gotten even to first base in the evaluations.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . ii

List of Tables . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . viii

List of Figures . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . xiii

Executive Summary . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . xiv

I. Introduction . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 1

II. Drawing Power . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 5

  Method . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 7
    Participants . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 7
    Procedures. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 10
    Stimuli . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 14
    Instruments . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 16

  Results. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 18
    Appeal . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 18
      Appeal of the series . . . . . . . . . . . 18
      Appeal of the segments . . . . . . . . . . 25
      Appeal of the format . . . . . . . . . . . 27

    Impact. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 31
      Learning content . . . . . . . . . . . . . 31
      New content. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 41
      Where ideas presented . . . . . . . . . . 43
      Acceptance of ideas. . . . . . . . . . . . 46
      Who ideas good for . . . . . . . . . . . . 51

    Children's Suggested Improvements . . . . . . 57

  Conclusions . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 59

- III. Play Alongs 69
  - Method 71
    - Participants 71
    - Procedures 75
    - Stimuli 79
    - Instruments 79
    - Data Reduction 81
  - Results 83
    - Appeal 84
      - Loss of attention 84
      - Switching the channel 89
      - Attracting attention 91
      - Attention to each Play Along 93
      - Liking types of programming 97
      - Liking of each Play Along 99
      - Responses while viewing 102
      - Summary 107
    - Impact 107
      - Participation while viewing 108
      - Recall 109
      - Participation while not viewing 109
      - Interest in future participation 115
      - Summary 117
    - Effects of Viewing Frequency and Parental Opinion 120
      - Viewing frequency and appeal 121
      - Viewing frequency and impact 128
      - Observer opinions 128
      - Observer opinion and appeal 131
      - Observer opinion and impact 134
      - Summary 136
    - Problems and Improvements 136
      - Pace 137
      - Availability of materials 141
      - Distinguishable as program elements 143
      - Observer evaluations and suggested improvements 148
      - Summary 150
  - Conclusions 153

IV. How to Watch TV . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 163

Method . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 164

Participants . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 165
Procedures . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 165
Stimuli . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 166
Instruments . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 167

Results . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 168

Recall . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 168
Recognition of Main Points . . . . . . . . . . 175
Evaluations of the Drop-In's Messages . . . . 177
Application of the Drop-In's Messages . . . . 178

Conclusions . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 182

V. How Children Think and Feel About Prosocial Programming: A Pilot Study . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 184

Method . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 185

Results . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 187

Concepts of Prosocial Programming . . . . . . 187
Learning From and Emotional Responses to Family Shows and Children's Specials . . . . 201
Learning From and Emotional Responses to Short Segments in Prosocial Shows . . . . . . 217

Conclusions . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 227

VI. Implications for Prosocial Programming . . . . . . . . . 233

References . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 241

Footnotes . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 242

Appendices

A. Participant Recruitment for Drawing Power and How to Watch TV . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 245

B. Segments Comprising Drawing Power, How to Watch TV, and Fat Albert Tapes . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 249

C. Researcher's Text and Child's Responses Sheet for Day 4 Questionnaire About Drawing Power and How to Watch TV . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 251

D. Researcher's Texts and Child's Responses for Day 5 Questionnaire About Drawing Power and How to Watch TV . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 259

E. Researcher's Text for Day 4 Interview About Drawing Power and How to Watch TV . . . . . . . . . 284

F. Researcher's Text for Day 5 Interview About Drawing Power . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 286

C. Participant Recruitment for Play Alongs . . . . . . 291

H. Observer Information for Home Observations of Children's Viewing of Play Alongs . . . . . . . . . 295

I. Activity Sheet Used by Family Observers for Home Observation of Children's Viewing of Play Alongs . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 302

J. Children's Questionnaire About Play Alongs Administered by Observers . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 313

K. Observer's Self-Administered Questionnaire About Play Alongs . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 325

L. Coding System for Play Along Activity Sheets . . . 330

M. Comments from Family Observers about Play Alongs. . 340

N. Researcher's Questionnaire for Pilot Study About How Children Think and Feel About Prosocial Programming . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 355

8

# LIST OF TABLES

Page

II- 1 Drawing Power Sample . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 8

II- 2 Drawing Power Episodes Viewed and Tested . . . . . . . . . . . . 15

II- 3 Rated Appeal of Drawing Power. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 19

II- 4 Appeal of Drawing Power Compared to Other Program . . . . . . 21

II- 5 Estimated Appeal of Drawing Power for Other Children . . . . . 23

II- 6 Rated Appeal of Drawing Power Segments . . . . . . . . . . . . 26

II- 7 Appeal of Drawing Power's Characteristics. . . . . . . . . . . 28

II- 8 Recognition of Messages in Drawing Power Segments . . . . . . 33

II- 9 Recall of Drawing Power Messages Two Days After Viewing It . . 35

II-10 Recall of Messages from Drawing Power Segments Two Days After Viewing It . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 37

II-11 Recall of Drawing Power Messages Right After Viewing It . . . 39

II-12 Recall of Messages from Drawing Power Segments Right After Viewing It . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 40

II-13 New Ideas Reported Learned from Drawing Power. . . . . . . . . 42

II-14 Sample of New Ideas Reported Learned from Drawing Power. . . . 44

II-15 Perceived Sources of Ideas (Measured by Multiple Choice Item in Questionnaire) . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 45

II-16 Perceived Sources of Ideas (Measured by Open- and Closed-Ended Items in Interview) . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 47

II-17 Acceptance of Behaviors Suggested in Drawing Power . . . . . . 49

II-18 Acceptance of Behaviors Suggested in Drawing Power Segments. . 50

II-19 Adjudged Appropriateness of Messages in Drawing Power Segments for Other Children. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 53

II-20 Who Drawing Power's Messages Should be Seen by (From Questionnaire Responses) . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 54

II-21 Who Drawing Power's Messages Should Be Seen by (From Interview Responses) . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 56

II-22 Recommendations for Improving Drawing Power and Programming Directed to Children . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 58

II-23 Investigator's Ratings of Drawing Power's Performance by Segments . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 64

II-24 Analysis of Children's Responses to Three Professor Rutabaga Segments Produced at Different Times . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 66

III- 1 Play Alongs Sample . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 72

III- 2 Family Observers Sample for Play Alongs . . . . . . . . . . . 73

III- 3 Losing Children's Attention by Type of Program Content in the Flintstones . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 85

III- 4 Attracting and Losing Children's Attention More Than Once During Program Segments by Type of Program Content in the Flintstones . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 88

III- 5 Children's Switching of Channels by Type of Program Content in the Flintstones . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 90

III- 6 Attracting Children's Attention by Type of Program Content in the Flintstones . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 92

III- 7 Losing Children's Attention by Type of Play Along . . . . . . 94

III- 8 Attracting Children's Attention by Type of Play Along . . . . 96

III- 9 Children's Reported Liking of Play Alongs, Flintstones Comedy Show (FSC), and Ads . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 98

III-10 Children's Ranked Liking of Flintstones Program Element . . . 100

III-11 Children's Reported Liking of Play Alongs. . . . . . . . . . . 101

III-12 Children's Positive Responses to Play Alongs . . . . . . . . . 103

III-13 Children's Negative Responses to Play Alongs . . . . . . . . . 104

III-14 Children's Participatory Responses to Play Alongs . . . . . . 106

III-15 Children's Reported Recognition of Play Alongs . . . . . . . . 110

III-16 Children's Recollection of Play Along Content . . . . . . . . 111

III-17 Children's Reported Participation in Activities Similar to Play Alongs When Not Viewing . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 112

III-18 Observer's Reports of Children's Participation in and Talk About Play Along Activities When Not Viewing . . . . . . . . . 114

III-19 Children's Reported Interest in Participation in Further Activities Similar to Play Alongs . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 116

III-20 Children's Reports of Play Alongs as Sources of Ideas for Other Activities . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 118

III-21 Children's Reported Ideas for Other Activities. . . . . . . . 119

III-22 Children's Reported Liking of Play Alongs and Flintstones Comedy Show (FSC) by Viewing Frequency . . . . . . . . . . . 122

III-23 Losing Children's Attention for Different Types of Program Content by Viewing Frequency. . . . . . . . . . . . . 124

III-24 Children's Negative Responses to Play Alongs by Viewing Frequency . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 126

III-25 Children's Positive Responses to Play Alongs by Viewing Frequency . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 127

III-26 Children's Participatory Responses to Play Alongs by Viewing Frequency . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 129

III-27 Loss of Attention by Children of Observers Who Liked and Did Not Like Play Alongs and the Flintstones . . . . . . 133

III-28 Participation in Play Along Activities by Children of Observers Who Liked and Did Not Like Play Alongs and the Flintstones . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 135

III-29 Observer's Judgments of Speed of Play Alongs . . . . . . . . 138

III-30 Children's Judgments of Speed of Play Alongs . . . . . . . . 139

III-31 Observers' and Children's Judgments of Availability of Materials for Play Alongs . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 142

III-32 Observers' Judgments of Play Alongs As Not Easily Distinguished by Children From Other Program Content . . . . 144

III-33 Children's Perceptions of Play Alongs as Discrete Program Elements. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 146

III-34 Observers' Judgments of Attention Required by Play Alongs . . 147

III-35 Observers' Evaluation of Flintstones Comedy Show Characteristics . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 149

III-36 Observers' Ideas for Improving Play Alongs . . . . . . . . . 151

III-37 Investigator's Ratings of Each Play Along's Performance . . . 156

IV- 1 Children's Reports That They Remember Seeing How to Watch TV Content . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 170

IV- 2 Children's Description of How to Watch TV Content . . . . . . 172

IV- 3 Number and Correctness of Ideas Children Recalled about How to Watch TV (Drawing Power Sample Only) . . . . . . . . . . 173

IV- 4 Children's Recall of Ideas From Specific How to Watch TV Segments . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 174

IV- 5 Children's Understanding of How to Watch TV Messages. . . . . 176

IV- 6 Children's Opinions of Novelty and Worth of How to Watch TV Messages. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 179

IV- 7 Children's Understanding of the Nature of How to Watch TV Segments. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 181

V- 1 Children's Open-Ended Answers for Classifying Drawing Power as a Program Type . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 189

V- 2 Children's Close-Ended Answers for Classifying Drawing Power as a Program Type . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 190

V- 3 Children's Answers for How Drawing Power is Like Other Prosocial Programs. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 191

V- 4 Children's Answers for How Drawing Power is Like Other General Entertainment Programs . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 192

V- 5 Children's Answers for How Drawing Power is Different From Other Prosocial Programs . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 193

V- 6 Children's Answers for How Drawing Power is Different From General Entertainment Programs . . . . . . . . . . . . . 194

V- 7 Program Cues Used by Children to Make Prosocial/For Fun Distinction . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 196

V- 8 Children's Answers for How Drawing Power is Different From the News . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 197

V- 9 Children's Understanding of Whose Idea It Is to Put Drawing Power on Television for Children . . . . . . . . . . 199

V-10 Children's Understanding of the Reason Drawing Power is on Television for Children . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 200

V-11 Children's Reported Viewing of Television Programs About People's Feelings . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 202

V-12 The Kinds of Shows Children Reported Watching About People's Feelings . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 203

V-13 Children's Reported Viewing of Family Shows . . . . . . . . . . 204

V-14 Children's Reported Viewing of Children's Specials . . . . . 205

V-15 Children's Reported Liking of Family Shows and Children's Specials . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 207

V-16 Children's Reported Reasons for Liking and Not Liking Family Shows. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 208

V-17 Children's Reported Learning from Family Shows . . . . . . . . 209

V-18 Children's Reports of Learning Elsewhere Same Content as in Family Shows and Children's Specials . . . . . . . . . . . . 210

V-19 Children's Reporting of Problems Portrayed in Family Shows That Make Them Think About Their Own Problems . . . . . . . . 212

V-20 Examples of Children's Own Problems that Problems Portrayed in Family Shows Made Them Think About . . . . . . . . . . . . . 213

V-21 Children's Reports of Family Shows Giving Them Ideas for Solving Their Own Problems . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 214

V-22 Examples of Ideas Children Receive From Family Shows for Solving Their Own Problems . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 215

V-23 Children's Reports of Special Feelings and Stronger Feelings While Watching Family Shows . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 216

V-24 Kinds of Special Feelings Children Reported Feeling While Watching Family Shows . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 218

V-25 Children's Recall of Messages From Short, Affective Segments. 219

V-26 Children's Classifications of Short, Affective Segments as Prosocial or For Fun . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 220

V-27 Children's Reported Intentions to Recall Short Affective Segments in Future . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 222

V-28 Children's Answers to When in Future They Will Apply Messages in Segments . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 223

V-29 Children's Reasons for Applying Messages in Segments Sometime in the Future. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 224

V-30 Children's Reported Liking of Short, Affective Segments . . . 225

V-31 Children's Emotional Responses to the Characters in the Short Affective Segments and Their Stated Reasons for These Responses . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 226

V-32 Children's Other (Non-Character Mediated) Emotional Responses to Short, Affective Segments . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 228

## LIST OF FIGURES

II-1 Basic Procedures and Measurement Instruments . . . . . . . . . . 11

II-2 Estimated Appeal of Drawing Power for Other Children . . . . . 24

II-3 How Much Drawing Power's Messages Are Judged Worthwhile for Other Children . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 55

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
# AN EVALUATION OF NBC'S 1980-81 PROSOCIAL CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING

Submitted by
Aimée Dorr, Catherine Doubleday, Peter Kovaric, and Dale Kunkel
Annenberg School of Communications
University of Southern California

May 13, 1981

This is a very short summary of a very long report about an evaluation for three kinds of prosocial children's programming. Obviously there are a lot of details missing here, but not the basic facts. From reading this summary one can learn the essentials about what NBC programming was evaluated, who participated in the evaluation, how the research was done, and what information was obtained. If anyone is then curious about details, they can be found in pertinent parts of the complete technical report.

## Prosocial Programming Evaluated

The prosocial programming evaluated was all meant to be very appealing to children, while at the same time teaching or reinforcing socially approved information, values, and behavior or encouraging active participation in word games, crafts, music, and the like. The three types of programming were quite different from each other, as one can tell from these descriptions:

> Drawing Power is a half-hour series broadcast Saturday mornings at 11:30. Each episode contains 5-6 animated segments to teach or remind children about such things as nutrition, occupations, books to read, good personal habits, consideration of others, and pet care. Live actors introduce and comment on each animated segment, as well as joke among themselves.
>
> The Play Alongs are 30-120 second drop-ins added throughout the Flintstones Comedy Show which is broadcast Saturday mornings from 8:00-9:30. They are animated and mostly use characters from

the Flintstones cartoons. They are designed to engage children either during or after viewing in activities such as drawing, dancing, guessing riddles or scrambled faces, finding short words in longer ones, exercising, and the like.

The How to Watch TV drop-ins are 30 second segments inserted in Drawing Power and at other times in the Saturday morning schedule. They usually feature live actors. They are designed to teach children about aspects of television production and use such as special effects, program financing, scheduling time for viewing and homework, and the like.

## Participants in the Research

Participants lived in the greater Los Angeles area. They were contacted mostly through schools and afterschool care programs. Ninety-four children participated in the Drawing Power research; 86 pairs of children and older family members participated in the Play Alongs research; and both groups of children, but especially those in the Drawing Power research, provided information about How to Watch TV. There were about equal numbers of boys and girls aged 5-12 years in both the Drawing Power and Play Alongs groups. Both were mixed with respect to ethnic and social class background. Most older family members participating in the Play Alongs research were mothers, some were fathers, and a few were brothers and sisters. All parents gave informed consent for their children and family to participate. Small monetary gifts were given to the afterschool programs in which the Drawing Power research was done and to the families who participated in the Play Alongs research.

## Research Procedures

The research procedures were designed to give the best information possible with limited time and resources. All children had several experiences viewing Drawing Power, the Play Alongs, and/or How to Watch TV before they were tested about them, so that the programming would be quite familiar to them. Also, children viewed the programming and were tested in fairly natural situations, their afterschool care centers or homes, so that their reactions would be as normal as possible. Several different measurement techniques were used (including observations of children's behavior while watching the Flintstones Comedy Show, child questionnaires about all three types of programming, observer questionnaire about the Play Alongs, and child interviews about Drawing Power and How to Watch TV), so that information which might not show up with one technique would show up with another. Also, information was obtained from each child individually, so that none would be influenced by what another said or did. Finally, different children were tested at different times so that the final results combine information about four different Drawing Power episodes, six sets of Play Alongs, and four How to Watch TV drop-ins. This means the conclusions are relevant to each type of programming in general rather than to only one or two examples of it.

## Conclusions about Drawing Power

Children felt it was possible to learn things from Drawing Power.

- 88% said it was easy to understand its ideas
- 61% said they learned at least one new idea from it, but they did not believe most of its ideas were new to them

Children learned or were reminded about socially valued ideas in Drawing Power

- They correctly recognized 84% of the ideas asked about as coming from it
- Two days after viewing it, 72 of 74 children could describe things they remembered from the programs
- Children tested right after viewing recalled about two main ideas and one description of characters, actions or settings while those tested two days after viewing remembered one main idea and about three descriptions

Children agreed with or intended to put into practice ideas presented in Drawing Power

- They accepted 66% of the ideas asked about
- About 80% of those interviewed accepted the ideas they remembered

Children liked Drawing Power, but not a lot

- They gave it an average score of liking it a little but not a lot
- About 70% chose to watch it over another prosocial program
- Slightly less than 50% chose to watch it over other NBC Saturday morning cartoons

Children did not have many clear ideas about how to improve Drawing Power

- They did not think it had too many short segments when they were directly asked about this, but several lines of evidence suggest they prefer programs with longer segments which tell a story
- They did not think it tried too hard to teach them things or preached at them too much
- Several suggested it should be more humorous

Some types of Drawing Power segments were more successful than others

- Superperson University was the most successful in terms of children liking it very much, remembering it, and intending to do the things it suggested
- Professor Rutabaga and Wacky World were the least successful

Overall Drawing Power seemed most appealing to and to have the greatest impact on children at the younger end of the 6-11 age range.

## Conclusions about the Play Alongs

The Play Alongs encouraged children's participation in activities either during or after viewing

- 80% participated in the activities of one or more Play Alongs while they were being broadcast
- 79% reported getting ideas for things to do after viewing from one or more Play Alongs
- Each type of Play Alongs had a much smaller percentage of children participating or getting ideas for future activities than the 79-80% for all Play Alongs combined

The Play Alongs did not cause children to stop watching the Flintstones Comedy Show, but they were not as attractive to children as the cartoons

- Children were about as likely to stop watching television when the Play Alongs were on as when the Flintstones cartoons were on, and much less likely than when commercials, public service announcements, and other drop-ins were on
- The Play Alongs were less likely than the Flintstones cartoons to draw inattentive children back to watching television and much more likely to do so than the commercials, public service announcements, and other drop-ins
- Children said they liked the Play Alongs somewhat less than the Flintstones cartoons and much more than the commercials

Children and observers had a few ideas about how to improve the Play Alongs

- All the Play Alongs, except the scrambled faces, were more likely to seem too fast than too slow, but more than half the observers and children felt all the Play Alongs just about the right speed
- About half the children and observers felt the materials were not readily available for participating in the drawing and how to make something Play Alongs
- About half the observers felt Play Along ideas should be presented more slowly and repeated more often
- 65% of observers felt the Play Alongs should be longer

Some types of Play Alongs were more successful than others

- The scrambled faces, scrambled words, and silly symphony Play Alongs were most successful in terms of children liking them very much, watching them attentively, participating in their activities while they were broadcast, and getting ideas for other things to do
- The riddles Play Along was the least successful

There was no indication that the important findings of this evaluation were determined by the fact that information was only obtained from parents who were willing to participate in the study and children who had watched the Flintstones Comedy Show a few times in the past.

## Conclusions about the How to Watch TV Drop-Ins

Children remembered and learned from the How to Watch TV Drop-ins

- Of all children who saw How to Watch TV drop-ins with Drawing Power, about 80% said they remembered them and 62% of these children then correctly described something about them

- Of all children who watched the Flintstones Comedy Show (which had no How to Watch TV drop-ins in it), 65% said they remembered seeing them at some other time and 30% of the children then correctly described something about them
- 61% of children who saw a How to Watch TV drop-in with Drawing Power could correctly select its main idea from three possibilities

Children felt How to Watch TV was useful and applied to all programming

- 81% judged the information to be worthwhile for themselves and other children
- 74% recognized the information applied to all television programming not just Saturday morning

Some How to Watch TV drop-ins were more successful than others

- Animals Don't Die was most successful in terms of children understanding and remembering it
- It's Good to Have Different People on TV and Why Ads are on TV were the least successful

# I. INTRODUCTION

During the 1980-81 season NBC included a variety of types of prosocial programming in its Saturday morning schedule. A half-hour, magazine style series, Drawing Power, was developed. Short, freestanding drop-ins like Ask NBC News, How to Watch TV, and Time Out were produced. Play Alongs, short inserts using Flintstones characters and broadcast during The Flintstones Comedy Show, were developed to encourage viewer participation. NBC commissioned the research reported herein to evaluate the appeal and impact of some of this programming and to obtain additional ideas about prosocial programming for next season. Drawing Power, How to Watch TV, and the Play Alongs were chosen by NBC as the focus of the evaluation.

Like the other two networks, NBC devotes only a small proportion of Saturday morning broadcast time to programming which is manifestly prosocial (Children's Television Task Force, 1980). There are a variety of reasons for this. Foremost is the belief that the appeal of prosocial programming is less than that of "plain old entertainment." In general, ratings support this belief. When programming is designed primarily to inform, educate, or persuade, it is likely to attract fewer viewers. The reasons for this are largely unknown. Many argue it is simply because people do not want anything other than entertainment from their viewing experiences. Others counter that "prosocial programming" is produced with smaller budgets, is broadcast in time slots that militate against obtaining a large audience, receives less publicity, is produced by less skilled and experienced companies, and is narrowly conceived within an overly didactic, "hit 'em over the head with the 'prosocial-ness'" approach. With so many strikes against it, the argument goes, how can prosocial programming succeed?

Whatever the reasons for it, the fact that the ratings for prosocial programming are usually lower than those for standard entertainment programming presents problems for those who choose to broadcast prosocial programming. How can it be done without losing the audience, never mind attracting a larger audience than the non-prosocial competition? Will short segments interspersed among regular entertainment fare work? Will prosocial programming be better if it uses well-established characters? Can a half-hour series work? Is prosocial programming better as one complete dramatic story or as several shorter stories and more obviously didactic inserts? Does the use of animation help? Does humor increase appeal? These issues are faced by all those who wish to produce programming which is both prosocial and attractive -- be they the commercial networks, the public broadcasting service, or those who produce instructional programming (Lesser, 1974; Palmer & Dorr, 1980). NBC faced them in devising its prosocial programming. In this evaluation NBC sought to obtain some feedback on the effects of the choices it made.

Presenting attractive programming and avoiding offensive or harmful material must be major goals of a commercial network like NBC. Yet some of its programming admits to additional goals: to inform, to provoke thought, to encourage appropriate attitudes or behaviors, to provide aesthetic experiences, to permit religious expression. When these goals are adopted, for primetime, Saturday morning, weekday, early morning, or late night time periods, programmers often want to know how well they have been achieved. Is the content understood? Do viewers remember it? Does it provoke thought, change attitudes or behaviors, or evoke aesthetic or religious feelings? Does it reinforce socially-valued knowledge, attitudes, or behaviors? NBC looked to this evaluation for answers to some of these questions about Drawing Power, the Play Alongs, and How to Watch TV.

The character of the research reported here was jointly determined. NBC decided it wanted Drawing Power, How to Watch TV, and the Play Alongs evaluated. It outlined[1] the major goals of each type of programming and the major questions it had about their appeal and impact. We made suggestions about specific issues to examine and how to study them. A few conversations between us and NBC staff took place. Out of this process came the research plan. Some small changes were made in it while the work was being done, as we encountered possibilities and problems and as NBC thought of new concerns. The primary goals of the research were always to evaluate the appeal and impact of Drawing Power and the Play Alongs and the impact of How to Watch TV. It was assumed that an evaluation of the past season's programming would also provide useful planning information for next season.

It was agreed from the outset that the evaluation would aim for as much external validity and individual (as opposed to focus group) assessment as possible. To this end children were only exposed to complete programs, including commercials and all other usual nonprogram material. Even where research focused on short segments inserted into a program, children viewed complete programs with the appropriate inserts so that the segments would be experienced in the context in which they are normally presented. Viewing was done in environments in which children ordinarily watch television -- their own homes and afterschool care programs. The children were typical of members of NBC's Saturday morning audience. They were primarily 6-11 year olds, boys and girls from different social classes and ethnicities. Although they all resided in the greater Los Angeles area, recent work suggests that at least their programming preferences are not likely to differ from those of children residing in smaller communities (Eastman & Liss, 1980). All children tested had seen more than one example of the target programming, either because they had viewed it at least occasionally at home when it was regularly broadcast or because they had viewed it a few times as part of the research project at their afterschool care program.

Appeal and impact of the three types of programming were assessed in a variety of ways. Some had more external validity than others, but all provided measures for each child individually. Assessment techniques included observation by a trained parent (or other responsible family member) of a child's naturally-occuring behaviors while watching television, a self-report questionnaire completed by a parent (or other responsible family member) which elicited parental opinions and information about the child's naturally-occuring behavior at times other than while watching TV, a questionnaire administered by a trained parent (or other responsible family member) to an individual child, two self-report questionnaires administered by a trained researcher to groups of 2-4 children, and two interviews using mostly open-ended questions administered by a trained researcher to individual children.

The results obtained with these techniques are presented in the next three sections of the report. Each section begins by describing the prosocial programming being evaluated and the particular appeal and impact issues addressed. This is followed in order by a description of the methods used, a presentation of the results, and a short summary. Section II focuses on Drawing Power, Section III on the Play Alongs, and Section IV on How to Watch TV. Section V of the report describes pilot research about prosocial programming conducted by Catherine Doubleday as a pilot study for her doctoral dissertation. The report ends with a brief discussion of findings and their import for network Saturday morning prosocial programming.

## II. DRAWING POWER

Drawing Power is a half-hour series first developed for the 1980-81 season and produced by Newell & Yohe. It has a magazine-style format with seven types of animated segments. Book Reporters introduces children to books they could read, Whattaya Do Mom and Dad describes adult occupations, Professor Rutabaga describes nutritious foods, Wacky World relates humorous news items, Turkey of the Week describes the unpleasant consequences of bad personal habits and the benefits of reform, Pet Peeves gives tips on pet care, and Superperson University encourages roletaking and considering consequences to self and others. In an ordinary episode, five or six of these segments are shown. They are interspersed with introductions, commentaries, social interaction, and gags by three live actors who are cast as the segment animators at work in their studio. The live actors include Kari, a vivacious young black woman given to wearing glamorous clothes; Lenny, a weird but humorous young white man with unusual mannerisms, an ability to produce strange sound effects, and an entourage of uncommon pets; and Pop, a grumpy older white man who believes in old-fashioned cartoons, sex roles, and work habits.

The series was broadcast at 11:30 this season. It followed Jonny Quest on NBC and ran against such programs as Tarzan/Lone Ranger and American Bandstand on CBS and ABC. It was frequently pre-empted on the West Coast for the broadcasting of live sports events. Indeed, in December, January, and February, sports programming was available in the Pacific Time Zone at 11:30 more often than was Drawing Power. The late morning broadcast slot meant that the available audience included many more older children and adults and fewer younger children than would be available at an earlier hour.

The goals of the series were to entertain and inform children, and perhaps to influence them. It was intended that children would find the series, the characters, the various animated segments, and the format characteristics appealing, that the series would be at least as preferred as other prosocial and non-prosocial Saturday morning programming, and that appeal would be especially strong for children in the 6-11 year age range. Programmers were concerned that, while intending simply to encourage, reinforce, and instruct, the series had gone overboard and become preachy, heavy-handed, and pedantic. They also worried that the magazine-style format was less appealing to children than a continuous half-hour plotted story would be, despite the fact that the Superperson University and Turkey of the Week segments were themselves plotted stories. Finally, they wondered if the series might be most appealing to and have the greatest impact on children younger than either the 6-11 market or the upper end of the 6-11 range who are more likely to be watching at the time Drawing Power was broadcast.

In terms of impact of the series, programmers intended that children would take away some good ideas from their viewing. These could be information or socially-valued attitudes or behaviors actually learned from the series. They could also be desirable information, attitudes, or behaviors the series reminded children about and made attractive to them. In some cases it was intended that children would be encouraged in their intentions to be "good" -- to think about others, to read books, to care for pets, to eat well, to have good personal habits. Because ideas were presented by either or both the cartoons and the live actors, there were interest in finding out which of the two children perceived to be the source of ideas in Drawing Power. Finally, programmers wanted to know whom children thought Drawing Power's ideas were appropriate for.

There was concern that, although children would agree that it was a good idea to think about others, they might perceive this as appropriate only for those younger than they were, and that children their age did not need to be told things like that any longer.

The ways in which the data were gathered to address these issues about Drawing Power's appeal and impact are described in the next section on methods. What was learned about them is presented in the subsequent section.

## Method

### Participants

Ninety-four children provided data for the evaluation of Drawing Power (see Table II-1). Their ages ranged from 5 to 12 years, with a mean of 7.8 years. The sample was about evenly divided by sex, with 45 boys and 49 girls. It was also ethnically mixed. As determined solely by appearance and name (which obviously are imprecise indicators), it was 60% white, 32% black, 4% asian, 3% hispanic, and 1% other.

Children were drawn from five afterschool programs in four locations scattered around metropolitan Los Angeles. Three of the programs provided daily afterschool care for elementary school age children (5-12), one provided about one hour's care for young children (6-7) prior to busing them to their homes, and one provided supervised use of a school playground by children (5-12). Only the latter program was one which children attended sporadically rather than daily. In this case parents agreed to send their children to the program each day of the research. All of the programs were ethnically mixed. Two serviced primarily middle class families, one serviced primarily lower and lower middle class families, and two serviced families of mixed social class backgrounds.

Table II-1

Drawing Power Sample

| | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| **Basic Sample** | | | | | |
| Mean age in yrs | 6.3 | 6.3 | 9.2 | 9.4 | 7.8 |
| Age range in yrs | 5-7 | 5-7 | 8-11 | 8-12 | 5-12 |
| (N) | (24) | (23) | (25) | (22) | (94) |
| **In-depth Interview Sample** | | | | | |
| Mean age in yrs | 6.2 | 6.3 | 9.3 | 9.9 | 8.1 |
| Age range in yrs | 5-7 | 5-7 | 8-11 | 8-12 | 5-12 |
| (N) | (9) | (8) | (12) | (9) | (38) |

Children had three opportunities to provide data: once in a questionnaire and short interview administered the day after three days of viewing Drawing Power, the New Fat Albert Show, and other prosocial programming; once in a questionnaire administered immediately after viewing one episode of Drawing Power; and once in an interview conducted after the second questionnaire. The latter interview was intended for only a subsample of children, but the first two contacts were intended for all children. Of the total sample of children, 71% were present and tested at both of the first two contacts. A review of those who provided data for only one of the two contacts did not suggest any consistent explanation for why children would appear for the first testing and not the second or vice versa. Of the children who completed a questionnaire at the second contact, 46% were subsequently interviewed.

To examine age and sex differences in the appeal and impact of Drawing Power, the sample was divided into younger and older boys and girls. To keep the numbers roughly even by age, the split had to be 5-7 years and 8-12 years, rather than the 6-8 years and 9-11 years originally planned.[2] As shown in Table II-1, this division yielded about 20 children in each age and sex group who participated in either or both of the first two testings. The social class and ethnic mixes in the four groups are about the same. It should be noted, though, that the sample is relatively young. The mean age of the younger children was 6.3 years; that of the older children was 9.3 years.

As Table II-1 also shows, nearly half the children were interviewed after the second questionnaire was administered. They too were fairly evenly distributed by age and sex (45% younger children, 45% boys). Examination indicated that the four age and sex groups were equally mixed by social class and ethnicity.

## Procedures

Research procedures took five days to complete (see Figure II-1). One or more researchers visited each participating afterschool program on each of the five days to oversee the viewing and testing. For four afterschool programs these were consecutive days; for the fifth program the visits were spread over a seven-day period.[3] On each of the first two days children viewed an episode of Drawing Power. After each viewing children in three of the afterschool programs were free to choose to view another prosocial program. On the third day children viewed one episode of The New Fat Albert Show. Again those in three afterschool programs were allowed to choose another prosocial program to view. On the fourth day researchers administered the questionnaires and short interviews to children. On the fifth day, a third episode of Drawing Power was shown, children completed a questionnaire, and about half the children were then interviewed. The television programs the children viewed are described more fully in the succeeding section.

Afterschool programs which might participate in the project were identified through personal contacts. None were programs with which any of the researchers had previously worked. All programs contacted agreed to participate. They were offered a monetary incentive for participation, but in our opinion the incentive was not responsible for their participation. Letters informing parents about the project and an informed consent slip were sent home with the children (see Appendix A). A more complete description of the project was left with the director of the afterschool program (see Appendix A). Only those children who returned a parent consent form were allowed to complete the questionnaires or interviews.

Figure II-1

Basic Procedures and Measurement Instruments

| Day 1 | Day 2 | Day 3 | Day 4 | Day 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| View Drawing Power | View Drawing Power | View Fat Albert | Administer first questionnaire<br>● series appeal<br>● How to Watch TV viewing | View Drawing Power |
| View additional prosocial program chosen by children* | View additional prosocial program chosen by children* | View additional prosocial program chosen by children* | Administer first interview<br>● series recall<br>● How to Watch TV recall | Administer second questionnaire<br>● episode message recognition<br>● episode message acceptance<br>● How to Watch TV message recognition<br>● How to Watch TV evaluation |
| | | | | Administer second interview**<br>● episode message recall<br>● episode message acceptance<br>● series appeal<br>● series improvement |

* Children in one afterschool care program did not participate in this aspect of the project due to program restrictions on amount of time spent viewing television.

** This interview was administered to a subsample of approximately half the children who completed the second questionnaire.

Three people had primary responsibility for the afterschool programs (AD, CD, and PK). Two of them worked with one program each and one (PK) worked with three, two of which were at the same location. The responsible individual introduced the project to children in the afterschool program, including those without permission to participate. The researcher told children s/he and NBC were interested in their opinions about television, wanted to show them programs for a few days, and planned to find out what they thought about them. Children were told they could not give us their opinions without returning the permission slip, but they could watch the program.[4] Children believed that their information would help people make better children's television programs.

The person with primary responsibility at each site went alone the first three days and showed programs to the children. On the last two days s/he made the primary contacts with the children, but testing was carried out by three to five researchers drawn from a pool of seven (two or three men, the rest women), all either masters or doctoral degree candidates or graduates. All researchers had been trained in administering the questionnaires and interviews. All had watched episodes of Drawing Power.

Children viewed the programs on a video monitor. They were in color and clearly visible and audible to all children. The viewing situations were relatively informal. Children were free to come and go for toileting, washing hands, disposing of trash and the like. Sometimes children ate snacks while viewing; other times they just gathered around and watched. Occasionally a child's enthusiastic commentary or acting out was restrained, usually by other children, so that the rest of the group could still see and hear. The issue of children leaving for other forms of amusement did not arise. They were interested in the programs and chose to stay and watch at least the first one shown each day. The viewing sessions lasted about 40 minutes if one program was viewed and about 75 minutes if two programs were viewed.

Children who participated completely in the project viewed at least three episodes of Drawing Power in the afterschool program. Children who had not seen at least two Drawing Power episodes were not included in the final sample. Forty-five per cent of the children saw at least one other prosocial program in addition to Drawing Power and Fat Albert. Most of them chose Vegetable Soup or Big Blue Marble. All viewing was but a small addition to the children's television experience. All talked freely and knowledgeably about Saturday morning children's programming. Some were also familiar with children's prosocial programming broadcast at other times and by independent or public stations. The most the research procedures insured was that each child had seen Drawing Power (which was pre-empted on the West Coast most of December, January, and February) and one particular episode of Fat Albert (they were already familiar with the series).

Questionnaires were administered by a researcher to groups of two to four children, with groups of younger children being smaller in number than groups of older children. Children were seated at tables, usually spaced out to minimize influencing each other. Items were read aloud by the researcher who also demonstrated, as necessary, where to mark answers on the response sheet. Researchers monitored children's responses closely to be sure they were correctly entered on the response sheet. Whenever there was any question about a child's response, the researcher stopped to clarify it. Occasionally younger children had to be helped to keep their responses on the right line. Otherwise, children had little difficulty selecting and entering their opinions on the response sheet.

The first questionnaire required 15-20 minutes to complete. At the end children were asked to draw a picture of their favorite Saturday morning program. While the group did this, each child was individually interviewed for 5-10 minutes. The researcher wrote children's answers down on their response sheets. The second questionnaire required about 20 minutes to complete. After completion of the second questionnaire, children in one afterschool program were sent home on the bus. Selected children in the other four programs were interviewed in-depth. The researcher wrote their answers down on the interview schedule. Those who were not interviewed immediately were sent out to play at three of the sites and were asked to draw a picture of their favorite part of Drawing Power at the fourth site. This interview took 15-20 minutes to complete.

### Stimuli

Four episodes of Drawing Power and one of The New Fat Albert Show were used. They were taped off the air, either from the New York feed or from the Los Angeles broadcast. They included all commercials and other non-program material which would normally be seen in the home. The order of viewing and testing the Drawing Power episodes was rotated across the five afterschool programs (see Table II-2). This means that the aggregated data from both questionnaires reflect children's general reactions to the series and its separate elements rather than reactions to one particular program. The components of the four Drawing Power episodes and the one Fat Albert episode are described in Appendix B.

Videocassettes of other prosocial programs, all taped off the air in Los Angeles, were also available for children to choose to view. There was one episode each of Dusty's Treehouse, Vegetable Soup, Big Blue Marble, and

## Table II-2

### Drawing Power Episodes Viewed and Tested

| Site | Number of Children Drawn From It | Episodes Viewed on Days 1 and 2 | Episode Viewed on Day 5 | Segments in Day 5 Episode | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | Super U | What do | Prof. Rutabaga | Book Reporters | Wacky World | Pet Peeves | Turkey |
| A | 13 | 1,2 | 3 | X | X | X | X | X | X | -- |
| B | 32 | 3,4 | 1 | X | -- | X | X | X | X | X |
| C | 20 | 1,2 | 4 | X | X | X | X | XX | -- | -- |
| D | 29 | 3,4 | 2 | X | X | X | -- | X | -- | XX |

Animals, Animals, Animals. These were selected because (1) they were prosocial in nature, (2) they were or reasonably could be broadcast on Saturday morning, (3) they were a complete half-hour show, (4) they were not excessively didactic, and (5) they were not syndications of series which were orignally aired during primetime. In addition to choosing any of these programs to view, children could choose to view the fourth episode of Drawing Power (the one not scheduled for viewing at their site) or episodes of Drawing Power they had already been shown on a preceding day.

## Instruments

Two interviews and two questionnaires, one with four different forms, were developed. The two questionnaires were given to all children. They were similar in form, including rating scales, yes-no items, and multiple choice items. The text of each item was written out for the researcher. Children were only given response sheets with pictures (smiling to frowning faces) or simple words (YES, NO) to circle and simply labeled boxes (YES, NO, SHORT, LONG) to place checks in. The first questionnaire examined the appeal of the series and its format, the extent to which it would appeal to children older than, younger than, and the same age as the respondent, viewing frequency, and the ease with which program content could be understood. One question about How to Watch TV was included at the end. Copies of this questionnaire and response sheets are in Appendix C. The second questionnaire examined the appeal of one Drawing Power episode and its separate segments, what length segments children preferred, recognition of messages in the episode, acceptance of them, and the extent to which the messages should be seen by children older than, younger than, and the same age as the respondent. Several items about

How to Watch TV were included at the end. Four separate forms of this questionnaire were developed, one for each Drawing Power episode tested. Copies of the four forms of the questionnaire and response sheets are in Appendix D.

The first interview was given to all children (see Appendix E). It was very short, consisting of only two questions and related probes. Both questions were open-ended, asking children to recount everything they remembered about any Drawing Power and How to Watch TV programming they had ever seen. The probes encouraged further recall by the children. For Drawing Power, they also sought to elicit children's perceptions of the intended messages in Drawing Power content. The latter probes were used only when children gave only concrete descriptions of characters and actions which were meant also to convey a message. For example, a child's description of Law and Order whirling their sticks and showing a street full of dogs would be followed by a probe to see if the child received any message such as getting a dog tag, keeping one's dog at home, or generally obeying the law and keeping order.

The second interview was given to a subsample of the children (see Appendix F). It was highly structured. Most of the questions were open-ended, but some provided children with alternative responses from which to choose. The interview began by asking for recall of content from the Drawing Power episode children had viewed that day. The question was administered and probed as was the similar question in the first interview. The interviewer then had the child assess which content had not been known before viewing, and selected for further discussion two of the ideas the child had recalled. For each idea, the child was asked how it was presented in the program, who ought to see such an idea and why, and whether the child agreed with or would practice the idea and why. The interview ended with an exploration of children's opinions about the segmentation and preachiness of Drawing Power and any further suggestions they had for improving Drawing Power.

## Results

The results of the evaluation of Drawing Power are reported in three main sections: appeal, impact, and children's suggested improvements. The data on appeal were obtained from items in both questionnaires and the second interview. The data on impact were obtained from both questionnaires and both interviews. Suggestions for improvement were only elicited in the second interview. Issues of major interest to NBC were all addressed by more than one type of question, but all results are based on self-report data.

### Appeal

Most Saturday morning programming lives and dies by the ratings, the ultimate measure of appeal. In an effort to move beyond the ratings and better understand what was more and less appealing about the series and to whom, various aspects of appeal were measured. These included measures for entire programs or for the series, for the different types of segments in the series, and for several format characteristics.

Appeal of the series. When asked to rate the appeal of all Drawing Power episodes they had ever seen or the appeal of the episode they had just seen, most children said they liked it a lot. On a four point scale, they rated it 3.6 for the series as a whole and 3.7 for the program they had just seen. As is evident in Table II-3, younger children liked it somewhat more than older children, older boys liked it least, and the average rating for the series as a whole differed little from the aggregate of four programs rated individually. As is usually true, we must assume that the ratings suggest more liking than would be evident in children's at-home viewing choices.

## Table II-3

## Rated Appeal of Drawing Power

| | Younger | | Older | | All |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | Children |
| Mean liking of series | 3.8 | 3.9 | 3.4 | 3.4 | 3.6 |
| (N) | (17) | (20) | (22) | (19) | (78) |
| Mean liking of program just viewed | 3.9 | 3.9 | 3.8 | 3.4 | 3.7 |
| (N) | (20) | (22) | (23) | (19) | (84) |

Rating Scale

1 = Like Not At All

2 = Like Some

3 = Like A Little

4 = Like A Lot

Some indication of comparative appeal, indicating how the series would hold up in the face of competition, is provided by children's stated choices to view Drawing Power instead of another series ostensibly broadcast at the same time. These choices are also likely to be more pro-Drawing Power than would actual viewing choices at home. To examine them, two non-NBC prosocial series, Fat Albert and Big Blue Marble, and three other NBC series, Flintstones, Daffy Duck, and Jonny Quest, were used as comparisons. Drawing Power's apparent appeal diminished under this form of testing. As shown in Table II-4, 71% of the children said they would choose Drawing Power over Fat Albert and 67% would choose it over Big Blue Marble. Drawing Power's greatest audience loss would be among boys, especially older boys, when Fat Albert was broadcast and among younger children, especially girls, when Big Blue Marble was broadcast.

Drawing Power's appeal does not hold up so well when compared to other NBC programming. This trend would likely hold true for comparisons to the non-prosocial programming of the other networks. In the hypothetical choice situation, 38% of the children chose Drawing Power over the Flintstones, 44% over Daffy Duck, and 60% over Jonny Quest. Drawing Power's greatest audience retention would be among younger boys when the Flintstones was broadcast, among older girls when Daffy Duck was broadcast, and among younger boys and older girls when Jonny Quest was broadcast. Since the percentage of choices for Drawing Power is likely to be greater in the test situation than it would be in behavior at home, one assumes that Drawing Power would have a tough go of it in competition with an ordinary Saturday morning schedule. Ratings this season bear this out, although they are confused by the many sports programs broadcast at the same time as Drawing Power in many parts of the nation.

A third method for assessing Drawing Power's appeal was to measure its estimated appeal for other children. This was accomplished by asking children

## Table II-4

## Appeal of Drawing Power Compared to Other Programs

| % Children Prefer Drawing Power to Other Prosocial Program: | Younger |  | Older |  | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys |  |
| Fat Albert | 71 | 60 | 73 | 42 | 62 |
| (N) | (17) | (20) | (22) | (19) | (78) |
| Blue Marble | 33 | 68 | 77 | 78 | 67 |
| (N) | (15) | (19) | (22) | (19) | (75) |

| % Children Prefer Drawing Power to Other NBC Program: | Younger |  | Older |  | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys |  |
| Flintstones | 29 | 60 | 36 | 26 | 38 |
| (N) | (17) | (20) | (22) | (19) | (78) |
| Daffy Duck | 29 | 25 | 68 | 47 | 44 |
| (N) | (17) | (20) | (22) | (19) | (78) |
| Jonny Quest | 47 | 65 | 77 | 47 | 60 |
| (N) | (17) | (20) | (22) | (19) | (78) |

to tell us whether Drawing Power would be liked by children younger than, the same age as, and older than they were. As shown in Table II-5, virtually all children believed their peers would like it. Drawing Power's adjudged appeal dropped off when children were asked about younger children's liking of it, with only 77% saying children younger than they would like it. Appeal dropped further when older children's liking was being judged, with only 44% saying older children would like it. Girls, especially older girls, were least likely to feel that children older than they were would like the series. Altogether, the children's estimates of how much other children would like the series suggest, as the previously reported appeal measures did, that Drawing Power is attractive to children but not markedly so.

The data in Table II-5 can be used to estimate children's judgments of the ages of children for which Drawing Power is most likely to be appealing. In Figure II-2 we have graphed for the younger and older children in our sample the percentages predicting that other younger, same age, and older children would like the series. There is a line for the predictions of older children in our sample and one for younger children. Along the bottom of the graph are the approximate ages that "older," "same age," and "younger" should refer to for younger and older children in our sample. The figure clearly indicates that children believed the series would not be very appealing to children older than about ten (and perhaps even younger). They believed appeal would hold up better for the preschool audience, but they did not predict especially high appeal. These figures suggest that the maximum appeal of Drawing Power would be to children between the ages of approximately five and nine, certainly not the largest audience available at the time Drawing Power was broadcast this season.

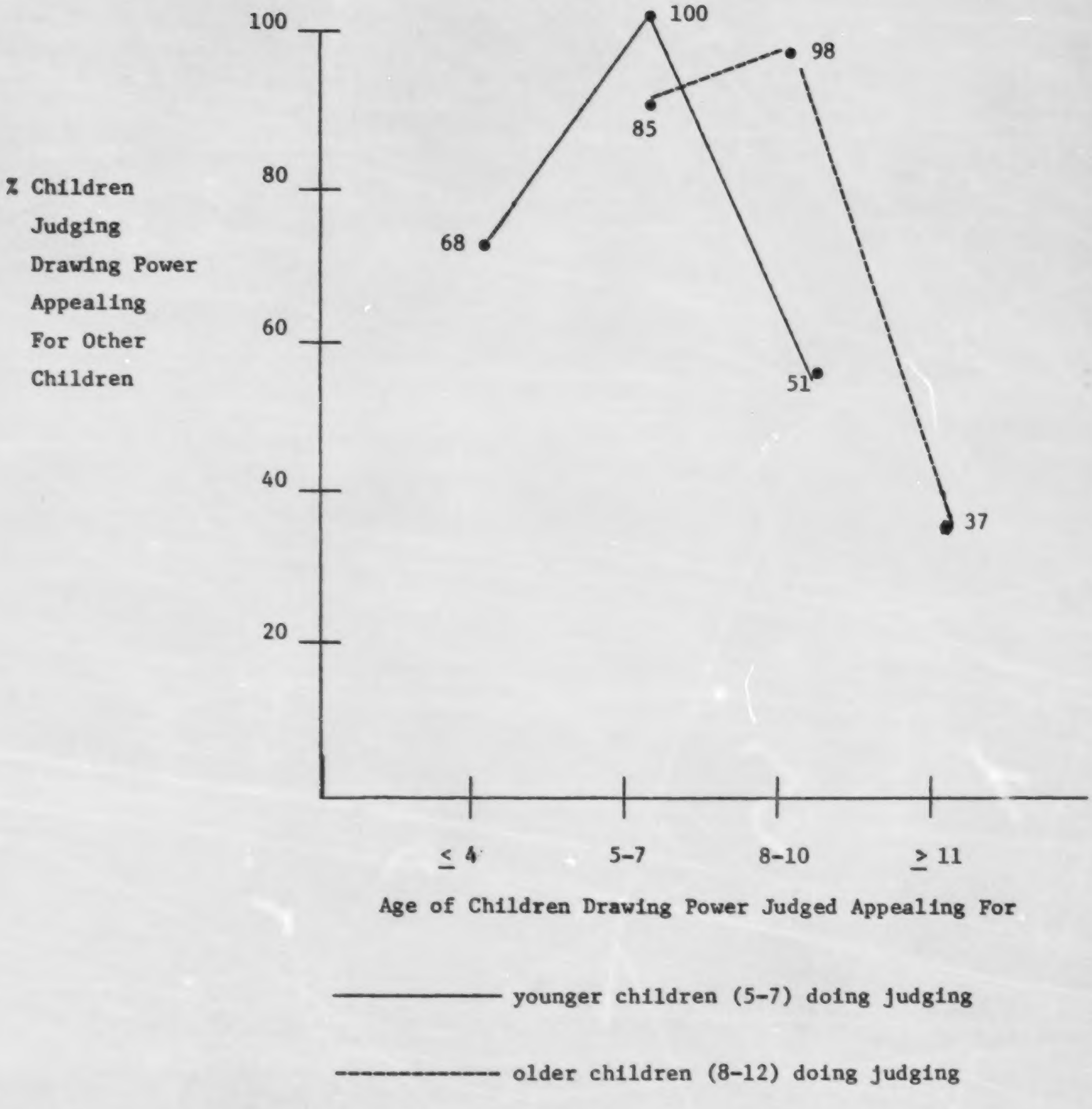
## Table II-5

## Estimated Appeal of Drawing Power for Other Children

| % Children Saying These Children Will Like Drawing Power: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Older children | 47 | 55 | 18 | 58 | 44 |
| Same age children | 100 | 100 | 100 | 95 | 99 |
| Younger children | 71 | 65 | 95 | 74 | 77 |
| (N) | (17) | (20) | (22) | (19) | (78) |

Figure II-2

Estimated Appeal of Drawing Power for Other Children



Appeal of the segments. Since Drawing Power had a magazine format, it had a number of identifiable types of content whose appeal could be rated. Such ratings were obtained from the children on the second questionnaire. They were asked about liking the live actors and each animated segment in the episode they had just viewed. Because all types of segments are not in all episodes of Drawing Power, the number of children rating each segment ranges from a low of 39 to a high of 84 for the entire sample, with a range of 8-23 for the individual age by sex groups.

As shown in Table II-6, the mean ratings for liking the segments ranged from 2.5 to 2.9 on a three point scale with all children combined. When children are broken down by age and sex, average ratings ranged from 1.9 to 3.0. In Table II-6 the types of content are ordered with the most liked at the top and the least liked at the bottom. This shows that Superperson University, Turkey of the Week, Whattaya Do Mom and Dad, and the live actors are the most liked types of content, while Wacky World and Professor Rutabaga are least liked.

The appeal of some types of content varied by children's age and sex. In comparison to younger children, older boys and girls liked Turkey of the Week somewhat more and Professor Rutabaga somewhat less. In both cases the age difference is more apparent for girls than boys. Older girls liked Wacky World less than did the other children. Older boys liked the live actors and Book Reporters less. The low average appeal of Wacky World to the entire sample is clearly attributable solely to the older girls dislike of it; younger children and older boys all liked it quite well. Whattaya Do Mom and Dad and Superperson University were well liked by children regardless of their own sex or age.

## Table II-6

## Rated Appeal of Drawing Power Segments

| Segment | Younger Girls | Younger Boys | Older Girls | Older Boys | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Super U | 2.8 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 2.8 | 2.9 |
| (N) | (20) | (22) | (23) | (19) | (84) |
| People | 2.8 | 2.9 | 2.9 | 2.5 | 2.8 |
| (N) | (20) | (22) | (23) | (19) | (84) |
| Whattaya Do | 2.9 | 2.8 | 2.9 | 2.8 | 2.8 |
| (N) | (11) | (15) | (16) | (14) | (56) |
| Turkey of Week | 2.6 | 2.7 | 3.0 | 2.8 | 2.8 |
| (N) | (14) | (13) | (14) | (12) | (53) |
| Book Reporters | 2.8 | 2.9 | 2.8 | 2.2 | 2.7 |
| (N) | (15) | (16) | (15) | (12) | (58) |
| Pet Peeves | 2.6 | 2.6 | 2.8 | 2.5 | 2.6 |
| (N) | (12) | (10) | (9) | (8) | (39) |
| Wacky World | 2.7 | 2.8 | 1.9 | 2.6 | 2.5 |
| (N) | (20) | (22) | (23) | (19) | (84) |
| Prof. Rutabaga | 2.7 | 2.6 | 2.2 | 2.5 | 2.5 |
| (N) | (20) | (22) | (22) | (19) | (83) |

Rating Scale

1 = Not Like
2 = Not Sure, or In Between
3 = Like

Appeal of the format. Three characteristics of Drawing Power's format can be singled out as relatively unusual for Saturday morning programming: its combination of animation with live action, its attempt to encourage, reinforce, and instruct, and its magazine style. Children's reactions to the latter two characteristics are of special interest because of concern that Drawing Power might go too far with each of them, becoming both preachy and overly segmented. Care was taken in the testing to elicit any negative opinions children might have along these lines.

Overall, children reported liking that Drawing Power had both animation and live action. Ratings for the facts that it had cartoons, live actors, and actors who joked with each other were 2.9, 2.8, and 2.8 respectively on a three point scale (see Table II-7). It should be noted that the older boys were less enthusiastic about the actors and their jokes than were the other children. These boys were, however, just as enthusiastic about the cartoons as were the other children.

In one assessment of reactions to Drawing Power's encouraging, reinforcing, and instructing, children were asked to rate how much they liked the way it tried to teach them things, the fact that people in the program told them what the cartoons were about, and the fact that the cartoons and the people gave them the same ideas. Mean rated liking on a three point scale was 2.7, 2.7, and 2.4 respectively for these items (see Table II-7). The data suggest that only the younger girls were enthusiastic about having the same ideas in cartoons and in live action (at least when researchers brought the repetition to their attention). This conclusion is reinforced by the older children's lower ratings for the fact that Drawing Power has the live actors tell about the cartoon content. Otherwise the ratings provide little indication that children found Drawing Power didactic or preachy.

## Table II-7

## Appeal of Drawing Power's Characteristics

| Characteristic | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| **Animation and Live Action** | | | | | |
| Have cartoons* | 2.9 | 3.0 | 2.8 | 3.0 | 2.9 |
| Have live actors* | 2.9 | 2.9 | 2.9 | 2.3 | 2.8 |
| Actors joke* | 3.0 | 2.9 | 2.9 | 2.5 | 2.8 |
| (N) | (17) | (20) | (22) | (19) | (78) |
| **Instructing, Encouraging, Reinforcing** | | | | | |
| Teaches things* | 2.6 | 2.8 | 2.7 | 2.7 | 2.7 |
| People tell about cartoons* | 2.9 | 2.8 | 2.6 | 2.3 | 2.7 |
| Cartoons and people give same ideas* | 2.8 | 2.4 | 2.4 | 2.2 | 2.4 |
| (N) | (17) | (20) | (22) | (19) | (78) |
| **Magazine Style** | | | | | |
| Have short stories* | 2.6 | 2.2 | 2.7 | 2.7 | 2.6 |
| (N) | (17) | (20) | (22) | (19) | (78) |
| % children want segments | | | | | |
| longer | 55 | 40 | 35 | 16 | 37 |
| same length | 36 | 50 | 61 | 68 | 54 |
| shorter | 9 | 10 | 4 | 16 | 10 |
| (N) | (22) | (20) | (23) | (19) | (84) |

*Rating Scale

1 = Not Like
2 = Not Sure, or In Between
3 = Like

In the interview conducted on the last day with about half the children, there was a second assessment of children's reactions to Drawing Power's style. Three questions were asked, each becoming more assertive in questioning whether or not Drawing Power was didactic and preachy. The first asked children's opinions of the way the series tried to teach them things, the second asked if it tried too hard to tell children what was good to do, and the third asked if it gave too many orders or lectures about how to act. Children were all asked about the reasons for their responses to each of these questions. None of this questioning provided any indication that the children found Drawing Power to be didactic, pushy, or preachy. They all said they liked the way it taught. Many said it showed what was good to do in a fun way and did not insist that viewers follow the suggestions. Four children, one younger boy, one older boy, and two older girls, even volunteered that children knew they did not have to do something just because television suggested they should.

Thus, there is little evidence that Drawing Power was seen as didactic or preachy by the children. They reported they did not like its repetition of ideas, but overall they liked the way it teaches. Even in the interview where it was suggested that the series was too preachy, children failed to agree that it was. It seems safe to conclude that children probably did not find Drawing Power to be anything more than encouraging, reinforcing, and instructing.

Children's reactions to Drawing Power's magazine style were assessed in three ways: (1) their ratings of how much they liked that it was made up of several short stories, (2) their choices of whether the series should remain the same or be changed to more shorter stories or fewer longer ones, and

(3) their reasons for these choices. The first two opinions were measured on the questionnaires and the last in the second interview. None of the three measures indicated that children strongly disliked the magazine format, but the latter two suggested that longer plotted stories would be a reasonable alternative format.

As shown in Table II-7, the overall rated liking for the fact that Drawing Power was made up of several short stories was 2.6 on a three point scale. Younger boys did not like this characteristic very well, but the younger girls and older boys and girls all liked it reasonably well. However, their ratings are not as high as they were for the cartoons and actors. A reasonable conclusion is that children liked this aspect of the series somewhat less than they liked others.

When children were asked whether the magazine format should be changed, 54% said it should remain the same, 10% said it should change to more, shorter stories, and 37% said it should change to fewer, longer stories (see Table II-7). Younger children were more likely than older children to say they wanted longer stories. Older children were more likely to want the series to remain as is. Subsequent interviews suggested that among the children who wanted longer stories some actually meant they liked longer stories. Others meant that they wanted Drawing Power to last longer than half an hour or that they wanted more of the stories they liked. Children who wanted shorter stories never meant they wanted less Drawing Power or fewer of the segments they disliked. Rather they meant they wanted more changes or more ideas in the same amount of time. However, very few of the children wanted more segmentation in the series.

Overall the data do not provide a clear indication that children would prefer a half-hour plotted program to a segmented one, nor do they suggest that the segmented format is heavily preferred. The magazine style received reasonable support from the children, but longer stories ran a close second.

## Impact

Drawing Power is different from most Saturday morning network series in that it intends to present, encourage, and reinforce prosocial information, attitudes, and behavior as well as to entertain. To assess how the series fared with these extra goals, measures examined how much children learned from Drawing Power's content, what content was new to them, where in the program they felt ideas were presented to them, how much they agreed with or intended to do the things suggested in the series, and who they felt should receive Drawing Power's messages. Results are presented in the following five sections.

Learning content. Children found it easy to learn at least some of Drawing Power's ideas. Rating the series as a whole, 88% of the children reported that it was easy to understand the ideas presented, with older children finding it somewhat easier (93%) than younger children (84%). Children's measured success (reported next) in recognizing ideas presented in one episode, distinguishing them from similar ideas not presented in the episode, and recalling program content all corroborate their report that the ideas were easy to understand -- and obviously show that ideas were easily remembered.

Children's recognition of messages in Drawing Power was tested only immediately after viewing one episode. Of the six or seven messages presented to the children in the questionnaire, one came from Fat Albert episode viewed two days earlier, one was a contradiction of an idea presented in the Drawing Power episode they had just seen, and the rest were from four or five different segments in the episode they had just seen. Where only four Drawing Power ideas were tested, those children's scores were adjusted to make them comparable to the scores of children tested on five ideas. The number of items for testing varied due to the different number and type of segments in each episode.

On the average, children (N=84) correctly identified 4.2 of 5 messages as coming from Drawing Power. There were no age or sex differences in children's recognition scores for ideas from the series. They misidentified an average of 0.6 of 2 messages as coming from Drawing Power when they did not. Misidentification was greater for the wrong idea based on a Drawing Power segment (43%) than it was for the right idea from Fat Albert (17%). Younger and older children did not differ in their misidentification rates. Girls were more likely to misidentify ideas not coming from Drawing Power than were boys (mean scores of .74 and .44 respectively).

When children were presented with an idea and asked to indicate whether it came from Drawing Power, ideas taken from certain segments were more likely to be recognized than were ideas from other types of segments. As Table II-8 shows, the percentage of children correctly identifying an idea as coming from Drawing Power ranged from a high of 96% for Whattaya Do Mom and Dad segments to a low of 70% for Turkey of the Week segments. Recognition scores for Whattaya Do Mom and Dad (96%), Book Reporters (90%), Pet Peeves (90%), and Professor Rutabaga (85%) segments were all quite good. Those for Superperson University (74%) and Turkey of the Week (70%) are not as good considering that guessing probability would be 50%. It is interesting, though not surprising, that the four segments which are more didactic and cognitive present ideas which were more easily recognized later. The two segments whose ideas were less easily recognized later both rely more on a storyline to convey the message, use the strategy of presenting "bad" behavior and its consequences before presenting "good" behavior, and deal more with social behavior. These findings emphasize again the difficulties programmers face in dealing efficaciously with social behavior.

### Table II-8

### Recognition of Messages in Drawing Power Segments

| % Children Correctly Recognizing Message In Segment: | Younger Girls | Younger Boys | Older Girls | Older Boys | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Whattaya Do | 100 | 100 | 87 | 100 | 96 |
| (N) | (11) | (15) | (16) | (14) | (56) |
| Book Reporters | 87 | 88 | 93 | 92 | 90 |
| (N) | (15) | (16) | (15) | (12) | (58) |
| Pet Peeves | 92 | 90 | 100 | 75 | 90 |
| (N) | (12) | (10) | (9) | (8) | (39) |
| Prof. Rutabaga | 90 | 82 | 87 | 79 | 85 |
| (N) | (20) | (22) | (23) | (19) | (84) |
| Super U | 70 | 77 | 65 | 84 | 74 |
| (N) | (20) | (22) | (23) | (19) | (84) |
| Turkey of Week | 57 | 62 | 80 | 83 | 70 |
| (N) | (14) | (13) | (15) | (12) | (54) |

There were few age or sex differences in children's recognition of ideas from different Drawing Power segments (see Table II-8). Older boys were somewhat less likely than were other children to recognize ideas from Pet Peeves segments. Girls were somewhat more likely than boys to recognize ideas from Professor Rutabaga segments. Younger children were less likely to recognize ideas from Turkey of the Week segments than were older children. This last finding parallels the previously reported lower appeal of Turkey of the Week segments for younger children.

Children's recall of messages in Drawing Power was tested with all children on the fourth day of the project. On days one and two they had seen two different episodes of Drawing Power, and on day three, one episode of Fat Albert. On all those days, some children saw additional Drawing Power episodes or other prosocial programming. On the day recall was tested, no programs were viewed. About half the children were also tested for recall in the interview on the fifth day. These children were asked to recall ideas only from the episode they had just seen, while children at the first testing were asked to recall ideas from any of the Drawing Power episodes they had seen in the afterschool center or at home. The first recall data presented here was obtained from all children interviewed without having just seen a Drawing Power episode. The data from the subsample of children who were interviewed after having seen one episode follow.

On the average, children were able to recall 3.7 separate content items from Drawing Power (see Table II-9). Only two children, one younger boy and one younger girl, could not recall anything from the series, while three children recalled as many as 9 or 10 items each. Not surprisingly, older children recalled more ideas overall. The items children recalled were

## Table II-9

## Recall of Drawing Power Messages Two Days After Viewing It

| | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Mean number messages recalled | 2.7 | 3.4 | 4.4 | 4.1 | 3.7 |
| Range | 0-8 | 0-9 | 1-9 | 1-10 | 0-10 |
| Mean number morals or main points | 0.4 | 0.5 | 1.4 | 1.7 | 1.0 |
| Mean number descriptions | 2.3 | 2.9 | 3.0 | 2.4 | 2.7 |
| (N) | (16) | (17) | (22) | (19) | (74) |

separated into those which captured the messages, moral, or main point of the segment (e.g., eat fiber, old people can do a lot, don't tattle) and those which simply described characters, settings, or actions (e.g., there was this man with a magic folding table, an old lady danced real fast, he always told on people). Older children recalled messages or points of stories more than did younger children. Children did not differ by age or sex in the number of recalled ideas which were simple descriptions of characters, settings, or actions. All children were likely to recall more of this simple descriptive content than of morals.

All the different types of Drawing Power segments were represented in ideas recalled by at least one child in the sample, but some types were more likely than others to have ideas recalled from them. As shown in Table II-10, the live actors and Superperson University were likely and Pet Peeves and Professor Rutabaga were unlikely to provide ideas which children recalled. Ideas from Whattaya Do Mom and Dad, Wacky World, Turkey of the Week, and Book Reporters were recalled by 10-20% of the children. Children were unlikely to recall more than one idea from any type of content except Superperson University and the live actors, although a very few children recalled more than one idea from Whattaya Do Mom and Dad and Book Reporters. The ideas recalled from the live actors were almost exclusively descriptions of clothing, mannerisms, possessions, and behavior. Ideas recalled from Whattaya Do Mom and Dad, Wacky World, and Book Reporters were mostly descriptions of their factual content. Ideas recalled from Superperson University, Turkey of the Week, Pet Peeves, and Professor Rutabaga were a mix of descriptions of characters and actions and of morals about good and bad behavior. Older children recalled more from each type of animated segment, but younger children recalled more about the live actors. The only sex difference was boys' greater recall of ideas from the Book Reporters segments.

## Table II-10

### Recall of Messages From Drawing Power Segments Two Days After Viewing It

| % Children Giving One or More Ideas From: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Live actors | 75 | 76 | 68 | 68 | 72 |
| Super U | 44 | 65 | 82 | 68 | 68 |
| Whattaya Do | 25 | 6 | 18 | 26 | 19 |
| Wacky World | 6 | 6 | 27 | 32 | 19 |
| Book Reporters | 6 | 18 | 18 | 32 | 19 |
| Turkey of Week | 6 | 6 | 14 | 21 | 12 |
| Pet Peeves | 0 | 0 | 18 | 0 | 5 |
| Prof. Rutabaga | 0 | 0 | 9 | 11 | 5 |
| (N) | (16) | (17) | (22) | (19) | (74) |

Children who were asked to recall ideas from one Drawing Power episode soon after viewing it volunteered more ideas than did children asked to recall ideas from earlier days' viewing (see Table II-11). However, the range in number of ideas volunteered after viewing one episode was constricted from 0-10 to 2-7. Also children differed in what they recalled, giving more morals than simple descriptions, recalling more ideas from more different types of segments, and reporting less about the live actors.

As shown in Table II-11, the average number of ideas recalled was 3.4 which does not differ substantially from the 3.7 ideas recalled by children who had not just watched a Drawing Power episode. Again, older children recalled more ideas and more ideas which were morals than did younger children, although most of the age difference is accounted for by the girls. The only notable differences between recall measures in Tables II-9 and II-11 is in recall of the moral or point of a segment versus simple description of its content. When recall was assessed soon after viewing, all children were more likely to recall the morals presented in segments. As the time between viewing and recall lengthened, children in the age range tested forgot the morals in the stories and remembered more about characters and their actions.

The two testing situations also produced differences in the segments from which ideas were recalled. More children recalled ideas from each type of segment when they were tested soom after viewing. As shown in Table II-12, at least 30% recalled something from each of the eight types of segments. When testing was a day or two after viewing, only two of the eight segment types had such recall rates. Ideas from the other six types were recalled by less than 20% of the children (see Table II-10). Superperson University remained the major source of ideas which children recalled. Live actors became a minor source, shifting from the most frequent to the next to least

Table II-11

Recall of Drawing Power Messages Right After Viewing It

| | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Mean number messages recalled | 2.9 | 3.9 | 4.1 | 3.4 | 3.4 |
| Range | 2-5 | 3-7 | 3-7 | 2-5 | 2-7 |
| Mean number morals or main points | 1.0 | 1.9 | 3.4 | 2.2 | 2.2 |
| Mean number descriptions | 1.9 | 2.0 | 0.7 | 1.2 | 1.2 |
| (N) | (9) | (7) | (11) | (9) | (36) |

## Table II-12

## Recall of Messages from Drawing Power Segments Right After Viewing It

| % Children Giving One or More Ideas From: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Super U | 44 | 86 | 100 | 89 | 78 |
| (N) | (9) | (7) | (11) | (9) | (36) |
| Turkey of Week | 71 | 50 | 89 | 60 | 74 |
| (N) | (7) | (2) | (9) | (5) | (23) |
| Pet Peeves | 50 | 0 | 75 | 50 | 52 |
| (N) | (8) | (3) | (8) | (6) | (25) |
| Whattaya Do | 33 | 0 | 80 | 80 | 50 |
| (N) | (3) | (5) | (5) | (5) | (18) |
| Prof. Rutabaga | 12 | 57 | 64 | 33 | 43 |
| (N) | (8) | (7) | (11) | (9) | (35) |
| Book Reporters | 56 | 43 | 12 | 38 | 38 |
| (N) | (9) | (7) | (8) | (8) | (32) |
| Live Actors | 33 | 57 | 45 | 12 | 37 |
| (N) | (9) | (7) | (11) | (8) | (35) |
| Wacky World | 22 | 29 | 36 | 33 | 31 |
| (N) | (9) | (7) | (11) | (9) | (36) |

frequent. Ideas recalled from the live actors were still primarily descriptions of clothing, mannerisms, possessions, and behaviors, but a greater proportion of the ideas were morals about behavior (e.g., Pop shouldn't be grumpy). Superperson University, Pet Peeves, Turkey of the Week, and Professor Rutabaga were all likely to be the source of recalled morals about good and bad behavior. Whattaya Do Mom and Dad, Wacky World, and Book Reporters were likely to have their factual content described. Just as with the delayed recall measure, younger children recalled more about the live actors and -- with one exception -- older children recalled more from each type of animated segment. The one exception is Book Reporters, from which younger children recalled more ideas than did older children when recall was assessed soon after viewing. The sex difference in delayed recall of ideas from the Book Reporters disappeared in immediate recall. Two new sex differences appeared. Girls recalled more ideas from Turkey of the Week and Pet Peeves than did boys.

Altogether the recognition and recall measures suggest that children profited from Drawing Power. They felt the series was easy to understand, they recognized most of its ideas when they heard them again, and they were able to recall content on their own. The ideas children obtained from the series are generally valued in our society. They learned about books, occupations, and foods. They were encouraged to think of others, think before acting, care for pets, be neat and clean, obey the law, and the like. Clearly, Drawing Power succeeded in its goal of providing children with prosocial messages.

New content. Children believed that most of the ideas they recalled from Drawing Power were known to them before they were seen on television. As shown in Table II-13, children reported in the in-depth interview that an average of 1.2 of the 3.4 ideas they recalled were not previously known to them. Of the total number of ideas recalled, children said about one quarter

## Table II-13

## New Ideas Reported Learned from Drawing Power

| | Younger | | Older | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | All Children |
| Mean number ideas reported as not known before | 1.1 | 0.9 | 1.4 | 1.1 | 1.2 |
| % children reporting any ideas as not known before | 56 | 57 | 73 | 56 | 61 |
| (N) | (9) | (7) | (11) | (9) | (36) |

of them were new. Shifting the focus from ideas to children, data show that 61% of the children reported at least one recalled idea was not previously known to them. Older children in general and especially older girls were more aware of having learned something new from Drawing Power. This is probably because they are more aware of what they do and do not know, more self-reflective, than are younger children. They can therefore know they have learned something new and report that to the researcher whereas younger children will not recognize they have learned something.

A sample of the ideas children reported not having known before is provided in Table II-14. It is apparent that children believed they obtained new ideas from all types of segments. This is certainly a desirable achievement of the series, but our focus should not be restricted solely to learning new ideas. Drawing Power reinforced many socially valued ideas they already knew, ideas they felt were worth hearing again. This, too, is a desirable achievement.

Where ideas presented. Many of Drawing Power's messages are reported in both the animated and live action segments. Those that are not are sometimes presented in animation and sometimes by the cast. The extent to which children realized that messages were presented by both the cartoons and the cast was examined in the testing on the fifth day. In response to a multiple choice question about all Drawing Power ideas considered together, 83% of the children said messages were presented by both cartoons and live actors. The remaining children were about evenly split in nominating people or cartoons as the major source of ideas (see Table II-15). Older children were more likely than younger children to feel that ideas came from both sources. Younger children were more likely to feel that ideas came from the live actors.

## Table II-14

## Sample of New Ideas Reported Learned from Drawing Power

| Segment | Ideas |
|---|---|
| Book Reporters | good to read each book |
| Pet Peeves | chick grows up |
| Prof. Rutabaga | good to eat peas, celery, fiber<br>shouldn't use too much salt |
| Super U | old people can do a lot<br>should think about how others feel |
| Turkey of the Week | should keep self and room clean<br>should think before tattle |
| Wacky World | bird can sing opera<br>ape can paint |
| Whattaya Do | what meteorologist, orthopedist, dairy farmer do |
| Live Actors | distance of lightning by counting between light and thunder |

Table II-15

Perceived Sources of Ideas
(Measured by Multiple Choice Item in Questionnaire)

| % Children Saying Ideas Presented By: | Younger |  | Older |  | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys |  |
| Cartoons | 5 | 10 | 4 | 16 | 8 |
| Live actors | 10 | 19 | 4 | 0 | 8 |
| Both | 85 | 71 | 91 | 84 | 83 |
| (N) | (20) | (21) | (23) | (19) | (83) |

Children's ideas about message sources in Drawing Power were also explored in the in-depth interview, with different results. In the interview, children were asked about the source of two specific ideas, rather than about all Drawing Power ideas considered together as in the questionnaire. The two ideas were chosen by the interviewer from those recalled by the child. As is apparent from Table II-16, under this type of questioning children were much less likely to feel that ideas came from both the cartoons and the cast and more likely to feel they came from the cartoons. Examination of the specific ideas children reported as only being presented in the cartoons indicated that, indeed, 83% of them were not also presented by the live actors. Thus the differing results from the questionnaire and interview both seem accurate: viewed overall, ideas in Drawing Power are likely to be presented by both the cartoons and the actors but many ideas are not. When these specific ideas are discussed, as they were in the interview, children correctly perceived them to have been presented only in the cartoons.

Acceptance of ideas. Regardless of the degree to which Drawing Power's prosocial ideas were new to children or how much they recognized the sources of the ideas, the messages could impact children's attitudes or intended behaviors. Such impact was assessed in the second questionnaire and the second interview. In the questionnaire, children were presented with four or five possible behaviors they might reasonably perform after viewing a Drawing Power episode and asked if they would do each one in the future. The suggested behaviors were taken from each animated segment in the episode except Wacky World, one per segment. Most of the children saw an episode with five such segments. The scores of children who saw an episode with only four were adjusted to make them comparable. Over all children, six types of

### Table II-16

### Perceived Sources of Ideas
### (Measured by Open- and Closed-Ended Items in Interview)

| % Children Saying Ideas Presented By: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Cartoons | 44 | 64 | 50 | 47 | 51 |
| Live actors | 19 | 14 | 32 | 12 | 20 |
| Both | 38 | 21 | 18 | 41 | 29 |
| (N) | (9) | (7) | (11) | (9) | (36) |

segments were tested. In the interview, children were asked about their acceptance of two ideas they recalled from the Drawing Power episode they had just watched. The measure of acceptance depended on the idea being discussed: endorsing an attitude or intending to perform a behavior.

In the questionnaire measure, children reported intentions to perform an average of 3.3 of 5 suggested behaviors (see Table II-17). The percentage of children intending to perform behaviors advocated in any particular type of segment ranged from 41% to 92% (see Table II-18). At least 70% of the children intended to perform behaviors from each type of segment except Whattaya Do Mom and Dad, which obtained 41% acceptance. Except for the Whattaya Do Mom and Dad percentage, these acceptance rates compare quite well to those obtained in the interview. Here the acceptance rate was calculated for the first and second ideas discussed, no matter what segment they came from (see Table II-17). The number of children per segment type was too small to do otherwise. Despite the different methods of testing and calculating acceptance, the obtained acceptance rates of 83% and 80% for the first and second ideas respectively are comparable to the rates shown in Table II-18 for all but the segments on occupation.

There was no difference by age or sex in the average number of behaviors children accepted in the questionnaire measure (see Table II-17). In the interview measure there were some age and sex differences in acceptance, with the percentage of children accepting ideas increasing from older boys to younger girls to older girls to younger boys. The number of children is too small and the number of different ideas too large to determine the reasons for obtaining age and sex differences in acceptance rates in the interview and not in the questionnaire. The questionnaire data make it clear that the ideas

## Table II-17

## Acceptance of Behaviors Suggested in Drawing Power

| | Younger | | Older | | All |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | Children |
| **From Questionnaire:** | | | | | |
| Mean number of accepted behaviors (of 5 given) | 3.5 | 3.0 | 3.5 | 3.3 | 3.3 |
| (N) | (20) | (22) | (23) | (19) | (84) |
| **From Interview** | | | | | |
| % children accepting first idea given | 78 | 86 | 91 | 78 | 83 |
| (N) | (9) | (7) | (11) | (9) | (36) |
| % children accepting second idea given | 78 | 100 | 80 | 67 | 80 |
| (N) | (9) | (7) | (10) | (9) | (35) |
| Mean % acceptance of two ideas | 78 | 93 | 85 | 72 | 82 |

## Table II-18

## Acceptance of Behaviors Suggested in Drawing Power Segments

| % Children Accepting Behavior Suggested in: | Younger Girls | Younger Boys | Older Girls | Older Boys | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pet Peeves<br>Care for grown pets; feed pet and clean cage | 83 | 100 | 100 | 88 | 92 |
| (N) | (12) | (10) | (9) | (8) | (39) |
| Turkey of Week<br>Keep clean; not tattle | 100 | 69 | 100 | 58 | 83 |
| (N) | (14) | (13) | (15) | (12) | (54) |
| Super U<br>Think before act; follow rules; ask elderly for help; be in other's shoes | 55 | 59 | 91 | 89 | 83 |
| (N) | (11) | (22) | (23) | (19) | (75) |
| Prof. Rutabaga<br>Eat peas; eat fiber; taste before salting | 75 | 77 | 65 | 84 | 75 |
| (N) | (20) | (22) | (23) | (19) | (84) |
| Book Reporters<br>Read specific books | 47 | 75 | 87 | 58 | 72 |
| (N) | (15) | (12) | (15) | (12) | (54) |
| Whattaya Do<br>Think about specific job | 54 | 53 | 44 | 14 | 41 |
| (N) | (11) | (15) | (16) | (14) | (56) |

from some segments are differentially acceptable to children by age and sex (see Table II-18). Older children accepted the ideas from Superperson University more and those from Whattaya Do Mom and Dad less than did younger children. Girls more than boys accepted the ideas from Turkey of the Week. Older girls accepted the ideas from Professor Rutabaga less than did older boys. Inspection of the interview data does not suggest that the age and sex differences in acceptance rates obtained there are due to differences by age and sex in the frequency with which ideas from differentially acceptable segments were asked about.

Altogether these data suggest that the messages in Drawing Power were well accepted by children. They generally believed the facts presented, endorsed the attitudes, and intended to perform the behaviors. The only possible exception to this conclusion is acceptance of ideas from the Whattaya Do Mom and Dad segments. The items for this segment asked children if they would think about being an orthopedist, meteorologist, and dairy farmer. Interview responses suggested that children scored as not accepting this idea responded "No" because they had made up their minds about future careers. The children are obviously unrealistic, but maybe our measure of acceptance was too. The data on recognition of ideas (see Table II-8) showed that most children learned about careers from this segment. Probably this is more than enough impact to expect from it.

Who ideas are good for. The preceding section suggests that children found Drawing Power's messages appropriate for themselves. As another way of assessing this and to determine how appropriate children felt the messages were for other children, they were all asked whether they thought children older than, the same age as, and younger than they should see Drawing Power's messages. This question was asked for each of the different types of segments in the episode children viewed just before responding to the second questionnaire. Similar questions were asked in the subsequent in-depth interview. They focussed on the appropriateness for other children of two messages children recalled from the program.

As shown in Table II-19, children thought the ideas in most of the different types of segments should be seen by their peers, older children, and younger children. As with the similar appeal measure, children found the greatest number of segments to be appropriate for their peers, the next number for children younger than they were, and the smallest number for children older than they. Older children found the messages from fewer segment types to be worthwhile for their peers than did younger children. As compared to older children, younger children found messages from more segment types to be worthwhile for children older than they were. Looking at the estimates of the older and younger children in our sample aggregated over all segments (see Table II-20 and Figure II-3), one sees that the children found Drawing Power's messages to be most worthwhile for an audience skewed toward the younger end of the 6-11 market.

The interview data, presented in Table II-21, show similar patterns. The percentage of children feeling an idea was worthwhile for another group of viewers was greatest for peers, intermediate for children younger than they were, and smallest for children older than they were. When children felt it was worthwhile for younger children to be exposed to Drawing Power's messages, it was usually because they believed younger children did not yet know them. When ideas were judged worthwhile for peers, it was either because they were not known or because peers needed to be reminded of them. When ideas were judged worthwhile for older children, it was almost always because they needed to be reminded of them (e.g., to think about others).

## Table II-19

### Adjudged Appropriateness of Messages in Drawing Power Segments for Other Children

| % Children Saying These Children Should See Messages In: | Younger | | | | | | Older | | | | | | All Children | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | | | Boys | | | Girls | | | Boys | | | | | |
| | Older | Peer | Younger | Older | Peer | Younger | Older | Peer | Younger | Older | Peer | Younger | Older | Peer | Younger |
| Book Reporters | 60 | 93 | 47 | 69 | 94 | 81 | 53 | 100 | 67 | 58 | 75 | 75 | 60 | 91 | 67 |
| (N) | | (15) | | | (16) | | | (15) | | | (12) | | | (58) | |
| Turkey of Week | 22 | 56 | 78 | 57 | 100 | 71 | 08 | 69 | 100 | 33 | 78 | 89 | 26 | 74 | 87 |
| (N) | | (9) | | | (7) | | | (13) | | | (9) | | | (38) | |
| Whattaya Do | 50 | 83 | 100 | 44 | 100 | 67 | 36 | 93 | 86 | 36 | 82 | 64 | 40 | 90 | 77 |
| (N) | | (6) | | | (9) | | | (14) | | | (11) | | | (40) | |
| Prof. Rutabaga | 40 | 87 | 67 | 62 | 94 | 69 | 33 | 57 | 76 | 44 | 75 | 81 | 44 | 76 | 74 |
| (N) | | (15) | | | (16) | | | (21) | | | (16) | | | (68) | |
| Super U | 60 | 87 | 60 | 87 | 75 | 87 | 52 | 95 | 86 | 50 | 87 | 75 | 62 | 87 | 78 |
| (N) | | (15) | | | (16) | | | (21) | | | (16) | | | (68) | |
| Wacky World | 73 | 80 | 80 | 62 | 87 | 81 | 29 | 81 | 62 | 50 | 62 | 87 | 51 | 78 | 76 |
| (N) | | (15) | | | (16) | | | (21) | | | (16) | | | (68) | |
| Pet Peeves | 50 | 75 | 75 | 90 | 90 | 80 | 67 | 100 | 89 | 25 | 37 | 100 | 59 | 77 | 85 |
| (N) | | (12) | | | (10) | | | (9) | | | (8) | | | (39) | |
| People | 73 | 87 | 80 | 94 | 87 | 87 | 67 | 100 | 81 | 50 | 81 | 94 | 71 | 90 | 85 |
| (N) | | (15) | | | (16) | | | (21) | | | (16) | | | (68) | |

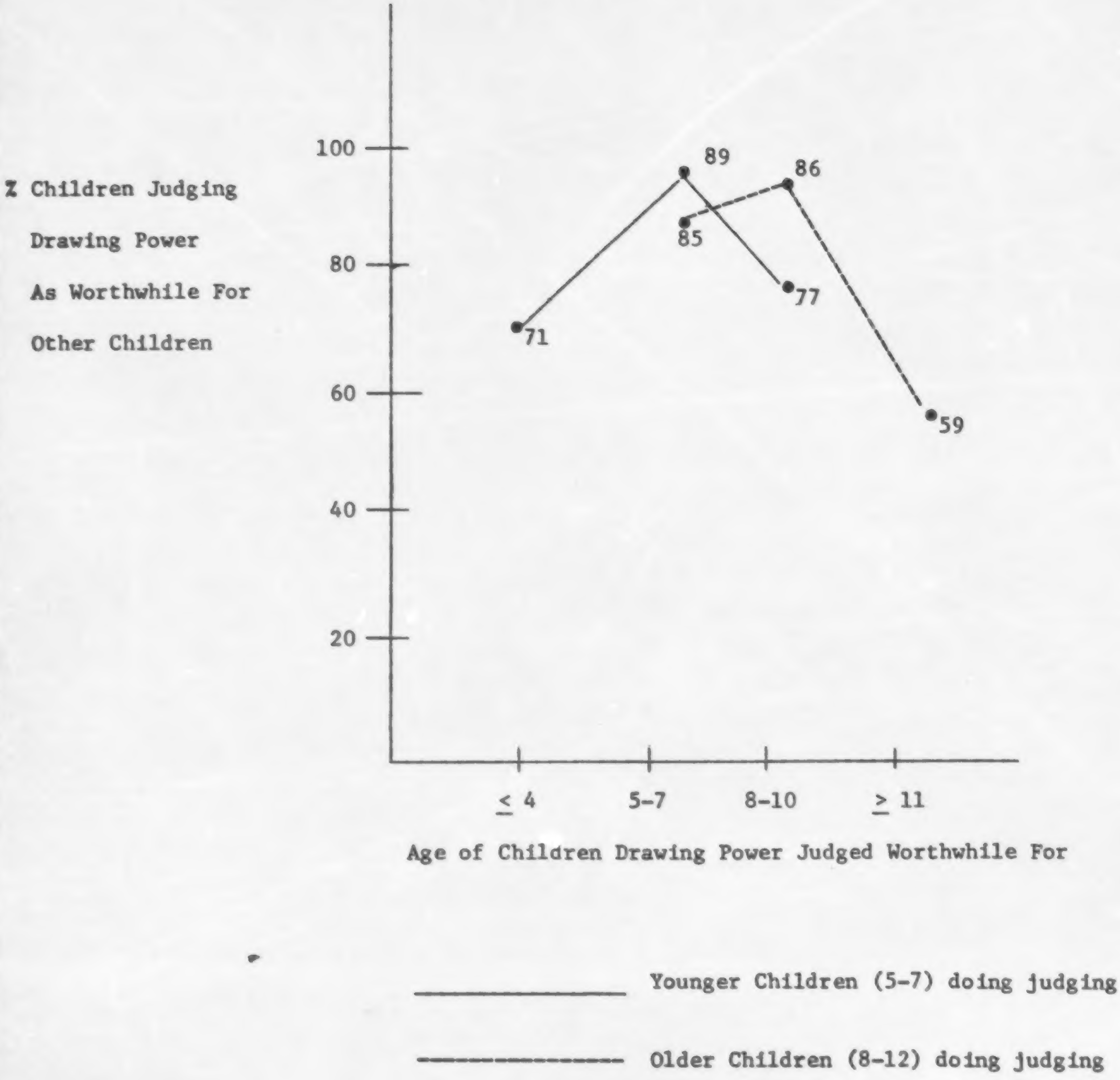
### Table II-20

### Who Drawing Power's Messages Should be Seen By<br>(From Questionnaire Responses)

| Mean Number of Segments (Max=7) Judged Worthwhile For: | Younger |  | Older |  | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys |  |
| Older children | 4.0 | 5.1 | 2.9 | 3.2 | 3.7 |
| Same age children | 5.8 | 6.3 | 6.0 | 5.2 | 5.8 |
| Younger children | 5.0 | 5.6 | 5.5 | 5.8 | 5.5 |
| (N) | (15) | (16) | (21) | (16) | (68) |

Figure II-3

How Much Drawing Power's Messages Are Judged Worthwhile for Other Children



## Table II-21

### Who Drawing Power's Messages Should Be Seen By
### (From Interview Responses)

| % Children Reporting Message Appropriate for: | Younger |  | Older |  | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys |  |
| Older children | 76 | 79 | 64 | 53 | 67 |
| Same age children | 76 | 100 | 95 | 76 | 87 |
| Younger children | 71 | 71 | 77 | 94 | 79 |
| (N) | (9) | (7) | (11) | (9) | (36) |

## Children's Suggested Improvements

At the end of the in-depth interview conducted during the last contact with the children, they were asked if there was anything else they would like NBC to do to improve Drawing Power and other programming for children. Forty-one percent of the children said they had no recommendations at all. As shown in Table II-22, about half the older children and the younger girls had no recommednations while all but one of the younger boys had recommendations.

Older children made concrete suggestions about how to improve Drawing Power, focussing on making segments fewer in number and longer and interjecting more humor and fun into the episodes. Younger children were more diffuse in their suggestions. Two of the seven younger boys suggested making the program longer, two wanted it funnier or more exciting, and two suggested it should produce content which would be even more successful in influencing people to be good. Among the younger girls who made recommendations, one suggested that Drawing Power show more things to learn and another suggested that it be broadcast more. Two suggested changes unrelated to Drawing Power. One wanted more Bugs Bunny and Scooby Doo and Flintstones; the other wanted more cartoons and sitcoms and no crime dramas or news programs.

These data suggest two things. First, many children have no suggestions or only rather general suggestions for how to improve programming directed to them. This paucity of ideas may have been caused by fatigue at the end of testing, satisfaction with Drawing Power and children's programming as they are, or inability to imagine what improvements might be like. It seems unlikely that general satisfaction with programming is responsible for the lack of concrete suggestions. Fatigue certainly is partially responsible.

## Table II-22

### Recommendations for Improving Drawing Power and Programming Directed to Children

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Younger Girls (N=7) | 3 | None |
| | 1 | More things to learn |
| | 1 | More Drawing Power |
| | 1 | More cartoons and sitcoms, no news and crime drama |
| | 1 | More Bugs Bunny, Scooby Doo, and Flintstones |
| Younger Boys (N=7) | 1 | None |
| | 1 | Longer |
| | 1 | Longer, funnier |
| | 1 | More action and excitement |
| | 1 | More about Gulliver and apes painting |
| | 1 | More to make people eat well, obey rules, etc. |
| | 1 | More to get people to act better |
| Older Girls (N=11) | 6 | None |
| | 1 | Longer shows without ads |
| | 1 | More jokes and cartoons |
| | 1 | Funnier but still educational |
| | 1 | Talk about religion |
| | 1 | Get parents and kids to watch together |
| Older Boys (N=9) | 4 | None |
| | 1 | Not asked |
| | 1 | Only 2-3 ideas or segments per show |
| | 1 | Longer series, more Wacky World, more true-to-life, fewer Turkey of the Week |
| | 1 | More fun and more cartoons |
| | 1 | More Wacky World, wacky things, and jokes |

Also, given earlier findings that adults cannot suggest many improvements for television other than broadcasting more of their favorite programming (Steiner, 1963), it is likely that children's inability to imagine improvements partially accounts for the lack of recommendations. Where children did suggest improvements, the most common were increases in length, more humor and fun, and more attention to and success in encouraging prosocial attitudes and behavior. This second finding from the data may not surprise broadcasters. It may only reinforce the directions they ordinarily have chosen.

## Conclusions

The results that have just been presented demonstrate that Drawing Power achieved several things. Children who watched it learned facts about occupations, foods, and books; learned or were reminded about good personal habits and how to get along with others; and were encouraged to incorporate such information, attitudes and actions into their own lives. Children liked the series and did not find it overly didactic, exhortative, or segmented. Drawing Power exposed children to many ideas that adults judge beneficial for them. Children believed that the majority of these ideas were not new to them but nonetheless thought they were worth seeing. They also felt it was worthwhile for other children to be exposed to these ideas.

Children were able to recognize ideas they had seen in Drawing Power when such ideas were described to them, and all of them could recall something they had seen in previous episodes of the series. As the time between viewing Drawing Power and discussing its content increased, there were changes in what children recalled about it. When they were tested right after viewing, they were likely to remember the main points of most animated segments, to say little about the live characters, and to give few simple descriptions of characters, settings, and actions. When they were tested two or more days after viewing, they recalled fewer main points of fewer animated segments, much more about the live characters, and many more specifics about the characters, settings, and actions. These differences suggest that over the long run it is easier for young children to remember simple descriptive characteristics of television programming and harder to remember a main point, message, or moral. Thus, a programmer who wishes to convey a moral needs to make the point in several ways and to demonstrate it in the actions and dialogue of the characters. The programmer should also be aware that live actors may be more potent than animation for conveying messages which children will recall over the long term.

No matter how Drawing Power's ideas were presented, children generally believed they would follow-up on or act in accordance with them. They indicated they intended to care for pets, think of others, respect the abilities of older people, and so on. Acceptance was greatest for those ideas which are most widely valued in our society. Acceptance was less for those ideas for which more individual choice is common. For instance, the proportions of children agreeing to read a particular book, eat a particular food, or think about holding a particular job were generally less than the proportions of children agreeing to have good personal habits, to care for pets, and to take others into account. This difference in acceptance rates is not remarkable. Rather it is something to be aware of in deciding how well different types of content succeeded in influencing children's ideas about what they would do in the future.

Turning from impact, where Drawing Power did rather well, to appeal, one finds that it did not achieve as much as one would hope. Children certainly liked the series. When they were asked to rate it on its own, nearly all said they liked it very much. However, its apparent appeal did not hold up well when children had to choose between viewing it and viewing another prosocial series. Drawing Power held up even less well when compared with a nonprosocial series. Nor did children believe that children younger and older than they were would all like it. Children older than those we tested were judged especially less likely to find the series appealing. All these findings suggest that in and of itself the series was reasonably attractive to children, or at least it was not unattractive to them. It was not, however, consistently more attractive than other programming which is also broadcast on Saturday morning.

The reasons for Drawing Power's moderate appeal to children are unclear. Although many have speculated that children simply do not enjoy being "taught" or "preached to" in children's programming, this opinion was not voiced by any of the wide range of children who participated in the present evaluation. They would not even agree the series was too preachy or heavy-handed when researchers suggested that it was. On the other hand, some children did suggest that the series could be improved by adding more humor or making the series even "wackier." Thus, it is possible that Drawing Power, which did not opt for a strong dramatic approach, would benefit from including more humor in order to be attractive to children.

In designing Drawing Power, programmers chose a segmented format with six animated elements surrounded by live action. Such a magazine format provides the programmer with more opportunities for variety and change and more chances to re-use segments that work especially well. On the other hand, this approach seems to be less appealing to older children who are most likely to be viewing at the hour Drawing Power was broadcast. A magazine format may also not be especially conducive to conveying well certain ideas about social behavior. This evaluation provided no evidence that children found Drawing Power to be overly segmented. They clearly did not want the series to be further segmented, but they were not strongly in favor of less segmentation.

This finding should be treated as tentative, because the evaluation may not have explored children's preferences well enough. There were only a few questions which addressed this issue, and several of them did not present children with concrete options for prosocial programming which was less segmented or not at all segmented. Future research might focus on this issue, as there are other indications that children would prefer a dramatic story line to a magazine format. These indications include increased viewing of plotted programming during the elementary school years, the continued popularity of Fat Albert, formative research for Freestyle which showed that fourth to sixth graders markedly preferred a half-hour dramatic series to a magazine format (Williams, LaRose, Smith, Frost, & Eastman, 1977), and children's greater preference for those Drawing Power segments which were longer and plotted over those which were shorter and less plotted (e.g., greater preference for Superperson University and Whattaya Do than for Professor Rutabaga and Wacky World).

The choice of a magazine format versus a longer plotted piece looms as an even larger issue when one considers the relative appeal of these two formats for younger and older children. In general, it is younger children who are more likely to find the magazine format appealing. This corresponds with the finding that Drawing Power was more appealing to the younger children in our sample. It was also judged by all children tested to be more appealing to younger than older children, and to have ideas which were more worthwhile for younger than older children. Furthermore, the series and its live characters were least appealing to older boys, whose negativity cannot be dismissed as simply a less positive attitude to all the items in the questionnaires.

These findings suggest that Drawing Power appealed most to the younger end of the 6-11 year old market. There is certainly nothing the matter with this. It is only problematic when the series is broadcast, as it was, late in the morning when a higher proportion of older children, adolescents, and adults is in the audience and just before Jonny Quest, which should be most attractive to older boys -- the very group that found Drawing Power least attractive.

The discussion so far has focussed on Drawing Power as a series rather than the particular types of content which comprised it or the changes which may have occurred in it over the course of production. The view has been molar. It will now become molecular. Hopefully, this more microscopic view will provide further understanding of Drawing Power's achievement.

One question a programmer may raise is whether some types of content in Drawing Power are generally better than others -- better meaning more appealing and more impactful. To explore this issue, each type of content in Drawing Power was rated on a three-point scale for each of several dependent measures used in the evaluation. The rating was done informally by the senior investigator. The three research assistants concurred with it. The results are shown in Table II-23. They show that Superperson University is the one type

### Table II-23

### Investigator's Ratings of Drawing Power's Performance by Segments

| | APPEAL | LEARNING | | | ACCEPTANCE | WORTH FOR OTHERS | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Rated Appeal | Recognize message | Recall without viewing | Recall with viewing | Acceptance | Ideas for peers | Ideas for Older | Ideas for Younger |
| Super U | + | - | + | + | + | + | 0 | 0 |
| People | 0 | NA | + | - | NA | + | + | + |
| Pet Peeves | 0 | + | - | 0 | + | 0 | 0 | + |
| Turkey of Week | 0 | - | - | + | + | 0 | - | + |
| Whattaya Do | + | + | - | 0 | - | + | - | 0 |
| Book Reporters | 0 | + | - | - | 0 | + | 0 | - |
| Wacky World | - | NA | - | - | NA | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Prof. Rutabaga | - | 0 | - | 0 | 0 | 0 | - | 0 |

Rating Scale

+ = High

0 = Medium

- = Low

NA = Not Applicable

of content which stands out from the others as a model to follow. In comparison to other segments, Superperson University was especially appealing, well recalled by the children, and accepted by them. Its ideas were in the middle range of adjudged worth for other viewers. The only area in which it failed to achieve a superior or moderate rating was in recognition of its messages. Obviously this ought to be improved, but is not a major failing since its content and messages were at least well recalled by the children.

At the opposite end of overall performance are the Professor Rutabaga and Wacky World segments. These received moderate or inferior ratings in all areas of appeal, message recognition, message recall, message acceptance, and adjudged value for other children. The remaining types of content received more mixed ratings, with those for the live actors probably the next most favorable after those for Superperson University.

Just as different types of content may produce different results with viewers, so may content produced at different times during the season. This possibility was examined, at the request of NBC, for three Professor Rutabaga segments. NBC's feeling was that those segments produced first lacked certain qualities of enthusiasm and salesmanship displayed in segments produced later. A partial test of this was made by comparing the segment about celery, produced later in the season, to those about peas and fiber, produced earlier. As shown in Table II-24, NBC's hunch was probably right. As compared to the segments about peas and fiber, the one about celery was liked better, recognized by more children, and accepted by more of them. These findings suggest that a series may change for the better over the production period as programmers become more adept at implementing their concepts.

All findings of the Drawing Power evaluation are derived from the self-reports of children whose sole or primary exposure to the series tended to be

## Table II-24

## Analysis of Children's Responses to Three Professor Rutabaga Segments Produced at Different Times

| | Produced Earlier | | Produced Later |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Peas | Fiber | Celery |
| Children's Mean Liking Score | 2.4 | 2.3 | 2.7 |
| (N) | (28) | (10) | (19) |

Rating Scale
1 = Don't Like
2 = Not Sure
3 = Like

| | Peas | Fiber | Celery |
|---|---|---|---|
| % Children Recognize Message | 79 | 82 | 100 |
| % Children Accept Message | 68 | 55 | 89 |
| (N) | (28) | (11) | (19) |

in the viewing situations for this research project during their afterschool care programs. These factors produce some limitations on the data. Self-report data may be inaccurate because it is easier to bias answers to questions than to bias actual behavior, because one is sometimes unaware of one's actual feelings, knowledge, or behavior, or because one is not always able to describe these well. Also, the viewing situation, while largely voluntary and relaxed, was probably more obligatory and restrained than Saturday morning viewing would be. Also, viewing was a group situation rather than with family or alone. Finally, although many of the children watched television during the afterschool program, the evaluation viewing situation was unusual and therefore more notable than would be any home viewing of the series. Although we cannot be certain about the effects of these factors on the obtained data, we can guess that they would increase the apparent appeal of the series and increase learning or remembering of its content. It seems likely that they would also increase reported acceptance of Drawing Power ideas, but this is less certain than the two other possible effects.

While the results of the evaluation may be colored somewhat by the reliance on self-report measures and center viewing, there are other factors which strengthen the data. One is that children were exposed to several episodes of Drawing Power in reasonably relaxed viewing situations prior to testing. A second is that children were tested about both the series overall and one particular episode in it. A third is that the episode tested varied over four possible episodes. A fourth is that children's opinions were assessed individually rather than in groups. A fifth is that information was obtained from children via both questionnaires and interviews. A sixth is that several afterschool care programs participated. And a seventh is that several experimenters participated. Altogether these factors make one more confident that findings which are consistent across children, measurement techniques, afterschool programs, experimenters, and references to the series or to an individual episode are likely to be accurate. They are unlikely to have been determined by the characteristics of children in a particular setting, of particular experimenters, of particular group dynamics, of a particular episode of the series, or of a particular method of questioning.

Bearing in mind these aspects of the evaluation process, certain conclusions seem warranted. Drawing Power was a moderately attractive series for children. It succeeded in presenting worthwhile content in ways children could understand and remember. Many of its ideas were ones children intended to use in the future. Some of its segments were more successful than others, and the success of segments probably changed over the season as changes were made in the way they were produced. Finally, the series is most appropriate for the younger part of the 6-11 audience.

## III. PLAY ALONGS

The Play Alongs are drop-ins to the Flintstones Comedy Show which were developed to encourage viewer participation on Saturday morning. They feature many of the Flintstones characters, as well as a few characters created especially for the Play Alongs. There are eight different types. One was designed to expose children to classical music. Five encourage children to participate with activities on the screen by dancing, guessing riddles, guessing shorter words spelled with the letters from longer words, identifying famous personalities from their scrambled faces, and performing physical fitness exercises. None of these require children to have any materials nearby in order to participate. The remaining two Play Alongs also encourage participation from children, but they require access to various materials. One shows how to draw various things, and the other how to make simple toys, musical instruments, and household objects. Each drop-in is two minutes or less in length.

In an ordinary episode of the Flintstones Comedy Show there are eleven Play Along inserts. There are three Riddles, one each of Faces, Words, Draw, Dance, Fitness, and Symphony, and one How To broadcast in two parts. These inserts are interspersed among the regular cartoons, commercials, other drop-ins, and public service announcements that make up the Flintstones Comedy Show which airs this season from 8:00 to 9:30 A.M. Saturdays. The early morning broadcast hour means that the audience is composed of proportionally more younger children than it will be at a later hour in the morning.

The major goal of the Play Alongs was to encourage children's active participation in an otherwise apparently passive viewing experience. To this end programmers sought activities which would be interesting to the early elementary school age child and which could be done in the home as they are broadcast on television. They also sought, as a secondary goal, activities which children might perform after viewing or which might stimulate similar post-viewing activities. There was some question about what such activities might be and about how to present them so that children would actually participate in them. Among the problems anticipated for the Play Alongs, the two most common were that they would go too fast for children to participate easily and that they would require materials to which children did not have easy and immediate access.

As one would anticipate, given that the Play Alongs do not confine themselves to pure entertainment, there was also concern that they would not be appealing to children. In particular, some worried that the Play Alongs might cause children who would otherwise be confirmed Flintstones Comedy Show viewers to switch to another channel. At the least there was fear that children might become inattentive to the television while they Play Alongs were being broadcast.

The evaluation of the Play Alongs was designed to address these issues of appeal and impact. The strong interest in the Play Alongs' appeal and in children's participation with them led to three important methodological choices. The first was that only children who had viewed several episodes of the Flintstones Comedy Show this season would participate. This choice was made in the belief that participation should only reasonably be expected from children familiar with the Play Alongs. The second choice was to actually observe children's behavior while viewing rather than simply asking them or others about this behavior. This seemed the most certain method for obtaining reasonable assessments of how much children enjoyed watching the Play Alongs and whether they actually participated in them. In addition to collecting these observational measures, questionnaires about appeal and participation were completed by children and by those who observed them. The third choice was to carry out these activities in the child's home and to have them done by a parent or other responsible family member. This seemed most likely to put the child in a familiar viewing situation and to remove any possible contribution of strangers or a strange environment to the child's behaviors. A more complete description of how these three choices were operationalized and of all evaluation methods is presented in the next section. The results and conclusions are presented in subsequent sections.

## Method

### Participants

Data for the evaluation of the Play Alongs were provided by 86 children (see Table III-1) and 76 family observers (see Table III-2). The age range for the sample of children was from 5 to 12 years, with a mean age of 8.6 years. The sample was about evenly divided by sex, with 41 boys and 45 girls. Based on the ethnicities of the school populations from which the sample was drawn, the sample is assumed to have been ethnically mixed. However, since data on ethnicity were not collected and since the researchers never met most participating children or parents, the ethnic composition of the sample cannot be conclusively determined.

Families were primarily recruited from three elementary schools, two public and one private, in metropolitan Los Angeles. Nine percent of the sample was recruited from other miscellaneous sources, usually through acquaintances of the researchers. All three participating schools are ethnically mixed. Two are attended by children of primarily middle class families and one is attended by children of predominantly lower middle class families.

Table III-1

Play Alongs Sample

| | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| **Basic Sample** | | | | | |
| Mean age in years | 6.9 | 7.1 | 9.7 | 10.4 | 8.6 |
| Age range in years | 5-8 | 5-8 | 9-11 | 9-12 | 5-12 |
| (N) | (24) | (18) | (21) | (23) | (86) |
| **Sources of Families** | | | | | |
| $School_1$ | 6 | 3 | 6 | 2 | 17 |
| $School_2$ | 12 | 6 | 14 | 11 | 43 |
| $School_3$ | 3 | 7 | 1 | 7 | 18 |
| Other sources | 3 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 8 |
| **Number of Activity Sheets per Child** | | | | | |
| 1 | 18 | 16 | 16 | 20 | 70 |
| 2 | 6 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 16 |

## Table III-2

## Family Observers Sample for Play Alongs

| | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| **Family Participants Conducting Observation and Child Questionnaire** | | | | | |
| % Mothers | 88 | 83 | 81 | 74 | 81 |
| (N) | (21) | (15) | (17) | (17) | (70) |
| % Fathers | 8 | 11 | 10 | 9 | 9 |
| (N) | (2) | (2) | (2) | (2) | (8) |
| % Brothers or sisters | 0 | 6 | 5 | 13 | 6 |
| (N) | (0) | (1) | (1) | (3) | (5) |
| % Both mothers and fathers | 4 | 0 | 5 | 4 | 3 |
| (N) | (1) | (0) | (1) | (1) | (3) |
| **Family Participants Utilized for Observer Questionnaire** | | | | | |
| % Mothers | 89 | 82 | 80 | 74 | 81 |
| (N) | (16) | (14) | (15) | (14) | (59) |
| % Fathers | 6 | 12 | 11 | 11 | 10 |
| (N) | (1) | (2) | (2) | (2) | (7) |
| % Brothers or sisters | 0 | 6 | 5 | 11 | 5 |
| (N) | (0) | (1) | (1) | (2) | (4) |
| % Both mothers and fathers | 6 | 0 | 5 | 5 | 4 |
| (N) | (1) | (0) | (1) | (1) | (3) |

Age and sex differences in appeal and impact, including participation in the Play Alongs, were examined by dividing the sample into groups of younger and older boys and girls. The age split for younger and older children was 5-8 years and 9-12 years. Table III-1 shows that the division yielded about 20 children in each age by sex group. Based on the sources from which these children were drawn, the age by sex groups should be reasonably equivalent in their ethnic and social class mix.

The sample of family observers was composed almost exclusively of parents (or parent surrogates such as girl friends and step-parents) of the children in the sample (see Table III-2). Of the 76 family observers, 72 or 95% of them were parents or parent surrogates. The remaining four observers were teenage brothers and sisters of the children. The total number of family observers (76) is less than the total number of participating children (86), because some people had two participating children in their family and one even had three. When this occurred observations and questionnaires for both children were included in the data. This means that in describing who completed the observations of the children and administered questionnaires to them some observers will be counted twice and one counted thrice -- once for each participating child. Under these circumstances, Table III-2 shows that fathers completed about 9% of the observations and child questionnaires, mothers completed about 81%, siblings completed 6%, and the remaining 3% were completed by mothers and fathers together. Older boys were more likely to have their data collected by siblings and less likely to have it done by mothers than were other children.

As will be explained in the section on procedures, each family observer also completed a questionnaire himself or herself. For these data we did not allow one observer more than once to contribute data about his or her opinions.

Instead one questionnaire from each observer (or two questionnaires in one instance) was dropped so as to provide roughly equal numbers of observers across the age and sex groups. This was done after an inspection of data from those observers who filled out more than one observer questionnaire. Since responses on the questionnaires were virtually identical, each observer's questionnaire responses were only tallied once. The only exception to this is responses about children's viewing patterns and Play Along activities at times other than viewing. Reasoning that the observer answered these items for each child individually, data for both (or all three) children were retained.

Table III-2 shows the distribution of observers when data from one of two or three participating children are removed. It is apparent that all of the observers of two or three children were mothers except for one father and one sibling. The distribution of types of observers across age by sex groups and overall remains quite similar to that in the first part of the table for all observations and questionnaires completed. It is also still true that older boys were less likely than other children to have their mothers as a family observer and more likely to have an older sibling as observer.

## Procedures

The major steps in obtaining data for the evaluation of the Play Alongs were recruiting participants, instructing participants in data gathering techniques, having participants gather the data, collecting the data, and expressing appreciation to participants. These steps will be explained in what follows.

Most participants were recruited through three elementary schools. Two schools were also participating in the evaluation of Drawing Power. All the schools were identified through personal contacts of the researchers, but none were places where researchers had previously worked. Each school administrator contacted readily agreed to allow recruitment of participants through the school. Administrators were offered the choice of monetary gift for the school (equivalent to ten times the number of participating families from the school) as an incentive for participation by the families or a monetary incentive to each family. All chose the latter, although one school permitted parents to designate their incentive for the school, and some parents did that. As with the Drawing Power evaluation, it does not seem that the monetary incentive was primarily responsible for families' participation in the project.

Letters describing the project and informed consent slips were sent home from schools with the children, and a more complete description of the project was left in the administrator's office (see Appendix G). At two schools, school personnel handled this entire process. At the other, a research assistant (CD) also returned to the classrooms to encourage participation in the project. Only those parents who returned a signed parent consent form were contacted with further instructions for participating in the project.

One researcher had primary responsibility for each of the participating schools (CD, DK, and PK). She or he made the initial contact with the school administrator, supervised the distribution of letters, collected consent forms, organized training sessions for family observers, supervised later training sessions conducted by telephone, and distributed and collected packets containing instructions and measurement instruments. At the first two schools contacted (those of CD and PK), two one-hour observer training sessions were conducted. These attracted a small percentage of the parents who had returned signed consent forms. After several telephone calls confirmed that those not in attendance were still interested in participating in the project, alternative training procedures were instituted in all three schools. Packets containing detailed instructions and all measuring instruments were sent home with each child who had returned a signed consent form (see Appendix H for cover letter). Several days later and just before the weekend, each parent was contacted by telephone. If the parent had not read the materials, a time for a return call was established. If the parent had read them, all questions were answered and pointers were given about the most important parts of the procedures. This procedures met, we believe, with a good deal of success. Subject loss was minimal. Parents asked questions when we called, the questions could be satisfactorily answered by telephone, and the questions reflected careful reading of the instructions and instruments. Returned observation sheets and questionnaires showed that parents and siblings by and large had no trouble completing them.

Participants who were recruited through personal networks were contacted by telephone or in a personal meeting. The project was explained and participation was requested. For those parents who agreed, a packet of instructions and instruments was delivered to the home and explained either at that time or later by telephone.

Each participating family carried out several activities in its home once training was completed. First, the Flintstones Comedy Show was viewed by the participating child on either one or two consecutive Saturday mornings. The child's activities during this period were observed and recorded by the family observer. The family observer was instructed to turn on the television set or to switch the channel to the Flintstones Comedy Show just as it began. If necessary, the child was encouraged to watch about the first five minutes of the series. After that the child was free to change the channel, leave the room, or otherwise not attend to the program. The child was also free, should any of these things occur, to return to viewing the Flintstones Comedy Show. For this reason, family observers were requested to remain ready to resume observing should the child resume viewing the program.

The original plan was to have all children watch the Flintstones Comedy Show on two consecutive Saturday mornings. As shown in Table III-1, 19% of the children in the sample did watch two episodes of the Flintstones. The rest of the children watched only one. This was because there was more subject loss when two observations were requested and there was insufficient time both to collect two weeks of observations and to present NBC with preliminary results on the schedule agreed to.

Once the only or last observation had been completed, the family observer immediately administered a questionnaire to the child. It took about 15 minutes to administer. When it was done, the observer completed a questionnaire himself or herself. This took about 10 minutes to complete.

After children viewed the Flintstones and family observers collected all data, parents were expected to return all completed instruments to the school with their child. Packets were collected by classroom teachers. Those few parents who neglected to follow this procedure were either contacted and reminded to send the instruments to school or were visited by a researcher who collected them on the spot. Families recruited through interpersonal networks returned their packets to the researcher who recruited them.

After all packets were collected, families were sent thank-you letters and checks for the monetary incentive which they had been offered. Parents were also told that a summary of the results would be available in their school office after the final report was submitted to NBC.

## Stimuli

Stimuli consisted of the eleven Play Along inserts and all other material broadcast during the Flintstones Comedy Show. Since different children viewed the series on different Saturday mornings, several instances of each of the different Play Alongs are included in the evaluation. In particular, at least some children in the sample viewed on each of the following Saturday mornings: February 7, 14, and 21, and March 7, 14, and 21. This means that the evaluation results for any particular type of Play Along, say Draw, reflect the performance of six separate Draw segments rather than just one or two, say drawing Fred.

## Instruments

Measurement instruments consisted of one observation form and two questionnaires. The observation form was used by all family observers to record the activities of the children while they watched the Flintstones Comedy Show. One questionnaire was administered by the family observer to the child when s/he had finished viewing the Flintstones. The other questionnaire was completed by the observer after all other activities were finished.

The observation form or Activity Sheet, as it was titled, provided space for the family observer to record the child's activities during each program element and program content actually being broadcast as the child performed his or her activities (see Appendix I). The form was ten pages long and listed sequentially all program elements by title and by the approximate time each should occur. Program elements were broken down into specific cartoons (e.g., Dino and Cavemouse), the Play Alongs (e.g., Scrambled Faces), commercials, station breaks, public service announcements, Ask NBC News, and Time Out. Family observers were instructed to enter the child's activities in the space provided adjacent to the description of the program element during which the activities occurred and to be as concrete, explicit, and noninferential as possible in their descriptions. Observers were all provided with descriptions of the types of program elements they would encounter and of likely activities by the children, as well as a sample observation sheet with the first page completed.

The Child Questionnaire and Interview consisted of a series of primarily close-ended questions designed to tap children's learning from and liking of the Play Alongs (see Appendix J). The heart of the questionnaire was a series of ten questions asking about each of the eight types of Play Alongs children could recall viewing. Issues addressed in these items -- besides recognition of the type of Play Along, recall of messages, and liking -- included whether the Play Alongs gave children ideas for similar activities to be done when not viewing and how well paced they were. Additional questions about availability of materials for participating in the Draw and How To Play Alongs were asked for these segments. At the beginning and end of the questionnaire, children were also asked about their liking of the Flintstones Comedy Show and the commercials included in it. Finally, they were asked which parts of the Flintstones -- ads, cartoons, or Play Alongs -- they liked best and second best. When all these questions were completed children were asked two questions about the How to Watch TV drop-ins. These questions and the findings from them are described in Section IV.

The Observer Questionnaire was a relatively short instrument made up almost entirely of close-ended questions (see Appendix K). In it, observers were asked to report their child's viewing frequency for the Flintstones on KNBC and on an independent station in the Los Angeles area. Observers were also asked to report the child's interest in Play Along activities expressed at times other than while viewing the series. Additional evaluative judgments were then requested about the desirability of various types of programming, the characteristics of the Play Alongs, and the ways in which the Play Alongs could be improved. Finally, the observers were invited to append any comments they wished about any of the programming being evaluated or about the research project itself.

### Data Reduction

Little or no reduction was done to the data from the questionnaires. Responses were transformed into numerical scores, lists, or percentages of respondents and will be presented as such in the results section. The observation form, however, required considerable time and effort to reduce its data to usable forms. Reduction was done so as to provide data pertinent to three issues: how and to what extent children's attention to the Play Alongs and all other parts of the Flintstones changed during the broadcast, how often and during what segments children switched channels, and how often and in what ways children responded to and participated in the Play Alongs.

After perusal of completed Activity Sheets and consideration of the issues being addressed by the evaluation, definitions of pertinent variables and exemplars of them were developed. Three types of variables were developed: changing the channel, changing attention, and responding to and participating in the Play Alongs. Changing the channel had three possible values: not changing the channel, switching the channel to KNBC, or switching the channel away from KNBC. Changing attention had four possible values: shifting attention to the programming, switching attention away from the programming, watching the entire time, or not watching the entire time. Responding and participating had four possible values: no response, making a negative evaluative response, making a positive evaluative response, and participating. The entire coding system, including complete definitions for and examples of variables and their values, is fully described in Appendix L.

Coding of responding and participating was done for each Play Along insert only. A child received only one of the four possible scores for each Play Along insert. When more than one score could be given, the one chosen was highest in the hierarchy of, in descending order, (1) participation, (2) positive response, (3) negative response, and (4) no response. For Riddles, where three were broadcast each Saturday, for How To which came in two parts, and for children who viewed two Saturday mornings, children's scores were combined to yield one score per type of Play Along. The same hierarchy of preferred scores was used.

Coding of attention changes was done for each type of program element each time it occurred during the Flintstones Comedy Show. Activity Sheets were blocked out into cartoons, individual Play Alongs, commercials, NBC drop-ins such as Time Out and Ask NBC News, and other PSAs in the order in which they were broadcast. The coder then moved through the blocked out Activity Sheet and coded each block for attention. If the child did not watch any of a block, that was indicated. If the child watched all of it, that was indicated. If the child's attention changed once or more, all attention changes within the block were noted.

Where there was more than one attention change during a program element block, a single score was arrived at by comparing the child's attention at the beginning of the block with attention at the end. If it was the same, no matter how many changes occurred in between during that block, the child was given a final score of not having changed attention during the block. If attention was different at the beginning and end of the block, it was scored either as a loss or gain in attention. This coding decision is discussed further in the section on the appeal of the Play Alongs (pp. 86-89) and data are presented there on the frequency of multiple changes in attention during one program element block.

For Riddles, where three were broadcast each Saturday, for How To which came in two parts, and for children who viewed two Saturday mornings, children's scores were combined to yield one score per program block or type of Play Along. This score was "no change" if the separate elements were all "no change" or were equal numbers of losing and gaining attention. The score was "attention loss" if one or more scores were loss and the rest were no change, if all were loss, or if the numbers of losses were greater than the numbers of gains. The criteria for a score of gaining attention were similar to those for losing attention except, of course, that scores were in the opposite direction of attention change.

Coding of changing the channel was done analogously to that for changing attention. However, there were very few instances of changing the channel, and all but one of these were switching from KNBC to another station. For this reason none of the issues arose for obtaining a single score for multiple changes of the channel, multiple inserts of one type of Play Along, and multiple viewings.

## Results

The results of the evaluation of the Play Alongs are reported in four main sections: appeal, impact, effects of viewing frequency and parental opinion, and problems and improvements. The data on appeal and impact were obtained both from observers' reports (Activity Sheet) and the Child Questionnaires. The data on effects of viewing frequency and parental opinion were obtained from the Activity Sheet, Child Questionnaire, and Observer Questionnaire. The data on problems and improvements were obtained from the Child Questionnaire and Observer Questionnaire.

## Appeal

As the avowed intent of the Play Alongs was to involve child viewers in activities which require more than mere visual and aural orientation to the set, it was assumed that a necessary condition for children to participate in some active way was that the Play Alongs be appealing to them. Appeal was measured in a number of ways. First, measures of attention were calculated using the behavioral data from the Activity Sheets. These measures permitted comparisons between types of content (Play Alongs, ads, cartoons, and other programming) for losing and gaining attention and switching channels and comparisons between the individual Play Alongs for losing and attracting children's attention. Second, on the child questionnaire, stated appeal was measured on a five point scale for each Play Along, for the Flintstones Comedy Show as a whole, and for the product commercials in the program. Finally, children were asked to indicate which of the three types of program elements (Play Alongs, cartoons, and ads) they liked best and which second best.

Loss of attention. A concern of NBC was that the Play Alongs might be insufficiently appealing to maintain attention to the Flintstones Comedy Show as a whole, which might explain the somewhat lower ratings the series has received this year. The data do not readily indicate such a trend. As is evident in Table III-3, 6% of the children ever stopped watching while a Play Along was being broadcast. This compares favorably to the findings of

Table III-3

Losing Children's Attention by Type of Program Content in the Flintstones

| % Children Who Are Watching and Stop Watching During: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Play Alongs | 7 | 6 | 6 | 7 | 6 |
| (N)* | (23) | (18) | (21) | (23) | (85) |
| Ads | 17 | 16 | 16 | 15 | 16 |
| (N) | (24) | (18) | (21) | (23) | (86) |
| Cartoons | 9 | 8 | 6 | 9 | 8 |
| (N) | (23) | (18) | (20) | (23) | (84) |
| Other** | 21 | 4 | 5 | 9 | 10 |
| (N) | (23) | (16) | (19) | (23) | (81) |

*Percentages for this table were calculated by first calculating a percentage score of attention loss for each child for each program content type. Then for each type of program content, the average percentage of attention loss across all children in each sex-age group was calculated. Thus N's equal the total number of children for each sex-age groups who had one or more opportunities to provide a negative attention shift score for that type of program content.

**Other = Time Out, Ask NBC News, PSAs, and other drop-ins, if any

8% for cartoons and 10% for other non-commercial segments (Time Out, Ask NBC News, other PSA's) and is considerably less than the finding that 16% of the children stopped watching while ads were being broadcast. This finding is based on treating the segments -- Play Alongs, cartoons, commercial blocks, and other -- as units and on assigning a single score for attention shift each time one is broadcast. That is, each time one of the four types of content was broadcast, each child was assigned one of four scores aggregating over all behavior changes during that time: did not watch entire time, no change (either was or was not watching at beginning and end of time), watching at beginning and not watching at end, and not watching at beginning and watching at end.

There are potential problems with these choices. First, the four types of content differ in the total amount of broadcast time they occupy. Cartoons occupy about 56 minutes of the Flintstones Comedy Show, Play Alongs about 10 minutes, commercials about 13 minutes, and other drop-ins and public service announcements about 3 minutes. There is, therefore, more cartoon time during which children may stop watching cartoons than there is time during which a child could stop watching the Play Alongs, commercials, and other drop-ins and PSAs. Similarly, there is more time for the child to shift attention more than once. Second, assigning one score per child for each segment of content masks those times when a child changes his or her attention more than once while it is being broadcast. That is, Child A who watched, did not watch, watched again, and then did not watch during Dino and Cavemouse received the same score for attention loss as Child B who watched and then did not watch.

Despite these potential problems, the choice of a single score per segment was made for three reasons. First, examination of the data indicated that multiple changes in attention -- the proportion of segments where children behaved in ways like Child A and not Child B -- occurred for only a small proportion of the segments (see Table III-4). The percentage seemed small enough that the potential loss of information from a single summary score did not outweigh the greater ease of presentation of data based on a single score. Second, there is no good estimate of the amount of time during which a child did or did not attend to any segment. Such an estimate, which we felt was too complex to ask of family observers, is really necessary to make sense of data on multiple changes in attention. Third, the crucial question seemed to be whether the Play Alongs caused children to stop watching the Flintstones. This could be answered well enough by the simpler summary score.

As suggested by the data in Tables III-3, 4, and 6, loss of attention measures probably reflect contributions from both the type of content being broadcast and the amount of broadcast time per content type. The facts that cartoons were most likely to have multiple changes in attention (8% of segments, as shown in Table III-4) and children resuming viewing (see Table III-6) suggest that any content which occurs more often and for longer periods of time may produce more attention shifts. However, attention shifts are also determined by the type of content being broadcast. As indicated by the data, percentages of multiple attention shifts (see Table III-4), attention losses (see Table III-3), and attention gains (see Table III-6) differed between Play Alongs and commercials which had similar amounts of broadcast time. Also, the other drop-ins and PSAs, which took very little broadcast time, had higher scores for attention change than did types of content which had more broadcast time. Specifically, other drop-ins and PSAs lost more attention than cartoons and Play Alongs (see Table III-3), had more multiple attention shifts than Play Alongs (see Table III-4), and gained more attention than commercials (see Table III-6).

## Table III-4

### Attracting and Losing Children's Attention More Than Once During Program Segments by Type of Program Content In the Flintstones

| % of Segments Watched and/or Not Watched More Than Once During: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Play Alongs | 01 | 00 | 01 | 01 | 01 |
| (N)* | (264) | (198) | (231) | (253) | (946) |
| Ads | 03 | 06 | 02 | 05 | 04 |
| (N) | (264) | (198) | (231) | (253) | (946) |
| Cartoons | 08 | 08 | 07 | 08 | 08 |
| (N) | (216) | (162) | (189) | (207) | (774) |
| Other** | 03 | 03 | 03 | 00 | 02 |
| (N) | (144) | (108) | (126) | (138) | (516) |

*N = number of segments, not number of children

**Other = Time Out, Ask NBC News, PSAs, and other drop-ins, if any

It appears then that the Play Alongs lose the attention of viewers more frequently than the cartoons, based on the amount of time available for viewing each type of content. Children overall stop watching commercials with the greatest frequency and cartoons with the least, with Play Alongs somewhere in between. The Play Alongs are probably closer to cartoons in the rate of attention loss, and the other programming is closer to the commercials. Older children and younger boys all were most likely to stop viewing while commercials were being broadcast. They were about equally likely to stop viewing during cartoons as during Play Alongs and as during other drop-ins and PSAs, although some adjustment of these figures needs to be made because of the different amounts of time the three types of content were broadcast. Younger girls, however, tend to stop watching the "other" category of programming somewhat more than commercials. As this category included the Time-Out drop-ins, which do not seem to be as appealing to younger girls as they are to other children, this latter finding is not surprising.

Switching the channel. A special case of loss of attention is changing the channel. While loss of attention to the Flintstones Comedy Show due to hunger, alternative available activities, need to use the bathroom, and the like, is important to know about, such data are only indicative of the relative appeal of qualitatively different activities. It is important to programmers also to know about appeal relative to other available television fare.

Channel switching gives this information. The instances of channel changing, as indicated by observer report, were so rare that they are reported as number of instances, rather than percentages, in Table III-5. As is evident in the table, children switched away from KNBC only nine times during the more than three-thousand segments they viewed. This frequency is, of course, so low as to be inconsequential. Children did not differ by age or sex in their frequency of switching, although older children are much more likely to switch during the commercials than at other times.

## Table III-5

## Children's Switching of Channels by Type of Program Content in the Flintstones

| Number of Times Children Switched Channels* During: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Play Alongs | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1* | 2 |
| (N)** | (264) | (198) | (231) | (253) | (946) |
| Ads | 0 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 7 |
| (N) | (264) | (198) | (231) | (253) | (946) |
| Cartoons | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| (N) | (216) | (162) | (189) | (207) | (774) |
| Other*** | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| (N) | (144) | (108) | (126) | (138) | (516) |

*The numbers in the cells indicate the number of times children switched channels away from KNBC, except for the "older boys/Play Along" cell which indicates one channel switch to KNBC from another station

**N = number of possible segments in each Flintstones Comedy Show of that content type X number of children in that sex-age group

***Other = Time Out, Ask NBC News, PSAs, and other drop-ins, if any

Although it is possible that the impulse to change channels was suppressed due to children's beliefs that they are not supposed to do so as a condition of the study, the greater loss of attention by other means reported in Table III-3 suggests otherwise. Children did feel free to leave the room, play with toys, talk to brothers, sisters, and observers, and in general not pay attention to the program for periods of time. Since observers were told explicitly that children should be allowed to change channels or otherwise stop viewing after the first five minutes, to assume that the low incidence of switching channels is spurious seems unwarranted.

Attracting attention. The observational data also allowed examination of the frequency with which children who were not paying attention to a segment at its beginning turned their attention to it sometime later. Before reporting these findings, it is important to note that they must be treated with caution because of a limitation in the observers' data. Program segments which were not attended to were often missed because children were entirely out of the viewing room. In these circumstances and because we did not ask observers to tell us whether children could still hear or see anything when they were out of the room, it is impossible to judge whether a resumption of attention to the television was due to the attractiveness of the segment being broadcast at the time or was simply due, circumstantially, to the child's readiness to return to viewing.

With the above caution in mind, it is evident from Table III-6 that children returned to viewing most often when cartoons were being broadcast. The percentage of children who resumed viewing while cartoons were on (62%) is larger than that for children resuming while the Play Alongs were on (47%). The percentage of children resuming viewing while commercials or other programming were being

## Table III-6

## Attracting Children's Attention by Type of Program Content in the Flintstones

| % Children Who Were Not Watching and Start Watching During: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Play Alongs | 62 | 24 | 65 | 34 | 47 |
| (N)* | (13) | (10) | (13) | (16) | (52) |
| Ads | 20 | 22 | 25 | 23 | 22 |
| (N) | (18) | (16) | (17) | (18) | (69) |
| Cartoons | 71 | 57 | 70 | 49 | 62 |
| (N) | (20) | (18) | (14) | (18) | (70) |
| Other** | 15 | 18 | 38 | 24 | 24 |
| (N) | (18) | (15) | (19) | (18) | (70) |

*Percentages for this table were calculated by first calculating a percentage score of attracting attention for each child for each program content type. Then for each type of program content, the average percentage of attracting attention across all children in each sex-age group was calculated. Thus N's equal the total number of children for each age-sex group who had one or more opportunities to provide a positive attention shift score for that type of program content.

**Other = Time Out, Ask NBC News, PSAs, and other drop-ins, if any

broadcast is even lower than that for Play Alongs (22% and 24% respectively). In considering this issue, it is appropriate to again look at the amount of time available for each type of segment. Since it is far more likely that cartoons are being broadcast than any other type of content, it should not be surprising that children most often returned their attention to the Flintstones Comedy Show while cartoons were being broadcast.

If return of attention was due entirely to chance and overall differences between types of programming were due to the proportion of time each occupied in an episode, one would be unlikely to find any age or sex differences in the data. However, the data in Table III-6 show some age and sex differences. Older children were more likely to resume viewing while the Play Alongs and other drop-ins and PSAs were being broadcast. Younger children were more likely to resume viewing while the cartoons were on. Girls were more likely to do so while the Play Alongs and cartoons were on. These data suggest that resumption of viewing is not entirely unrelated to the content being broadcast and that the Play Alongs function better than commercials, other drop-ins, and PSAs to attract children back to viewing.

Attention to each Play Along. Although Play Alongs as a type of program element compare favorably to other types of programming in their ability to attract and maintain an audience, it is possible that individual Play Alongs varied in how well they did this. To explore this possibility, the same measures of attention changes as reported in preceding sections were used.

Table III-7 indicates that no type of Play Along lost a very high percentage of children overall, the highest loss being 15% for Riddles. However, there were differences between Play Alongs. Faces, Word, and Dance clearly lost the fewest children; Draw and Symphony lost somewhat more; and How To,

## Table III-7

## Losing Children's Attention By Type of Play Along

| % Children Who Were Watching and Stop Watching During: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Symphony | 09 | 07 | 06 | 05 | 07 |
| (N) | (22) | (14) | (16) | (20) | (72) |
| Fitness | 22 | 07 | 10 | 09 | 13 |
| (N) | (23) | (15) | (19) | (22) | (79) |
| Riddles | 13 | 12 | 16 | 17 | 15 |
| (N) | (23) | (16) | (19) | (23) | (81) |
| Faces | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| (N) | (19) | (16) | (15) | (15) | (65) |
| Words | 0 | 0 | 06 | 04 | 03 |
| (N) | (19) | (11) | (18) | (23) | (71) |
| Dance | 0 | 07 | 0 | 07 | 03 |
| (N) | (20) | (14) | (18) | (15) | (67) |
| Draw | 10 | 0 | 06 | 14 | 08 |
| (N) | (19) | (12) | (18) | (14) | (63) |
| How To | 08 | 06 | 26 | 05 | 12 |
| (N) | (24) | (16) | (19) | (19) | (78) |

Fitness, and Riddles lost the most. There were minimal or no differences in loss among the different age and sex groups for Faces, Words, Symphony, and Riddles, indicating that some Play Alongs (Faces and Words) held most children's attention and some (Symphony and Riddles) lost a consistent percentage of younger and older girls and boys.

There are some comparatively larger differences in attention loss among the age and sex groups for the rest of the Play Alongs. Most of Fitness' loss of attention was due to losing younger girls (22%), a finding which corresponds to their previously reported distaste for Time Out. Draw lost a moderate number of all children except younger boys, who never stopped watching when it was on. How To had an almost opposite effect. It lost a moderate number (6-8%) of younger children and older boys (5%) and a relatively larger number (26%) of older girls. Dance lost some boys (7%) but no girls.

Table III-8 indicates that the Play Alongs varied considerably in the extent to which children resumed viewing while they were on. These data must be viewed cautiously not only because we cannot be certain the children knew what was on the screen when they resumed viewing but also because in some cases the number of children, especially by age and sex, who could possibly resume viewing was small. With such a small denominator, the percetage estimate of attracting viewers is quite unstable. Nonetheless, the data give some indications of which Play Alongs were better able to attract children's attention back to the screen.

Faces, Words, Riddles, and How To all were relatively successful in attracting children's attention. Dance, Symphony, Draw, and Fitness were relatively unsuccessful. Although the data in Table III-8 include figures for the extent to which the different Play Alongs succeeded in attracting the attention of children divided by age and sex, they will not be commented on here. In almost all cases

## Table III-8

## Attracting Children's Attention By Type of Play Along

| % Children Who Were Not Watching and Start Watching During: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Symphony | 50 | 0 | 40 | 67 | 36 |
| (N) | (2) | (4) | (5) | (3) | (14) |
| Fitness | 0 | 0 | 50 | 100 | 29 |
| (N) | (1) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (7) |
| Riddles | 100 | 50 | 100 | 0 | 80 |
| (N) | (1) | (2) | (2) | (0) | (5) |
| Faces | 60 | 50 | 83 | 75 | 71 |
| (N) | (5) | (2) | (6) | (8) | (21) |
| Words | 100 | 57 | 67 | 0 | 73 |
| (N) | (5) | (7) | (3) | (0) | (15) |
| Dance | 75 | 0 | 67 | 25 | 37 |
| (N) | (4) | (4) | (3) | (8) | (19) |
| Draw | 60 | 33 | 67 | 11 | 35 |
| (N) | (5) | (6) | (3) | (9) | (23) |
| How To | 0 | 50 | 100 | 75 | 75 |
| (N) | (0) | (2) | (2) | (4) | (8) |

the number of children on which the percentage is calculated is too small to provide a stable estimate. The only clear age or sex difference in the data is one already remarked on, that girls were more likely to resume viewing while the Play Alongs were on than were boys, except for Fitness.

These data, in conjunction with those on losing children's attention, suggest that some types of Play Alongs are better than others at retaining and re-establishing an audience. In particular, Faces and Words had very low rates of losing children's attention and very high rates of regaining it when it had been lost by other types of program content (not the Play Alongs). Physical Fitness had a high rate of attention loss and a low rate of regaining an audience. The other five types of Play Alongs were more mixed in their performance.

Liking types of programming. An entirely different approach to assessing the appeal of the Play Alongs was to ask children to rate their appeal and to compare these rating to the appeal of the Flintstones cartoons and the commercials broadcast during the episode. A second, similar approach was to ask children to rank these three types of programming in terms of liking. Both indicate that children like the Flintstones cartoons best, the Play Alongs second best, and the commercials least. As shown in Table III-9, the average rating of all Play Alongs combined indicated that children liked them a little and liked the cartoons right in the middle of a little and a lot. Children liked commercials right in the middle of not sure and a little. These patterns were generally maintained for each of the four age by sex groups, with younger boys showing the greatest spread in their opinions of the three types of content and older boys the least spread. Older boys also were unique in the equal rating given for the appeal of the Play Alongs and the Flintstones cartoons.

### Table III-9

### Children's Reported Liking of Play Alongs, Flintstones Comedy Show (FSC), and Ads

| Average Reported Liking of: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| All Play Alongs combined | 4.1 | 4.0 | 4.2 | 4.0 | 4.1 |
| FSC | 4.5 | 4.6 | 4.8 | 4.0 | 4.4 |
| Ads | 3.6 | 3.0 | 3.5 | 3.7 | 3.5 |
| (N) | (24) | (18) | (21) | (23) | (86) |

Rating Scale

1 = Not Like, A Lot

2 = Not Like, A Little

3 = Not Sure

4 = Like, A Little

5 = Like, A Lot

Children's rankings of these three types of programming confirmed the appeal ratings (see Table III-10). Sixty-seven percent of the children chose the cartoons as the best liked program element and 28% chose the Play Alongs. These figures were virtually reversed for children's choices of second most liked program elements. Commercials were chosen as most liked by only 5% of the children and as second most liked by only 3%. There were no very consistent age or sex differences in children's ranked liking of program elements, although younger girls and older boys were the most favorable toward the Play Alongs.

Liking of each Play Along. The rated appeal which has just been discussed was calculated as an average of the rated appeal of each separate type of Play Along. Here we examine the appeal of each type individually (see Table III-11). The appeal ratings of the individual types of Play Alongs, averaged over all children, range from a high of 4.5, as high as the average appeal for the Flintstones cartoons, to a low of 3.8, still slightly above the average appeal for commercials appearing in the Flintstones Comedy Show. Those Play Alongs with high rated appeal were Faces, How To, and Draw. Those falling in the middle range of rated appeal were Riddles, Symphony, and Words. Those obtaining the lowest appeal ratings were Fitness and Dance.

As in previous data, girls in general rated the Play Alongs more favorably than did the boys. The only Play Alongs for which the appeal ratings are reversed for the sexes are Riddles, while the ratings for Faces, Draw, and How To show opposite sex differences for older and younger children. Some of the Play Alongs were better liked by younger than older children. Falling into this category are Symphony and Riddles. Fitness and Words are better liked by older children. The other Play Alongs produced minimal age and sex differences in rated appeal.

### Table III-10

### Children's Ranked Liking of Flintstones Program Elements

| | Younger | | Older | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| % Children Liking: | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | All Children |
| Best | | | | | |
| Cartoons | 55 | 69 | 84 | 64 | 67 |
| Ads | 9 | 6 | 0 | 5 | 5 |
| Play Alongs | 36 | 25 | 16 | 32 | 28 |
| (N) | (22) | (16) | (19) | (22) | (79) |
| 2nd Best | | | | | |
| Cartoons | 41 | 0 | 11 | 32 | 23 |
| Ads | 4 | 7 | 0 | 14 | 3 |
| Play Alongs | 48 | 86 | 89 | 55 | 66 |
| (N) | (23) | (14) | (18) | (22) | (77) |

Children were asked what they liked best about the whole Flintstones Show: the cartoons, the commercials or the Play Alongs. They were then asked which of these program elements they liked second best.

## Table III-11

## Children's Reported Liking of Play Alongs

| Average Reported Liking of: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Symphony | 4.4 | 4.0 | 4.4 | 3.6 | 4.1 |
| (N) | (21) | (16) | (20) | (21) | (78) |
| Fitness | 4.0 | 3.5 | 4.1 | 3.5 | 3.8 |
| (N) | (22) | (13) | (18) | (17) | (70) |
| Riddles | 4.4 | 4.6 | 3.7 | 3.9 | 4.1 |
| (N) | (18) | (11) | (16) | (17) | (62) |
| Faces | 4.1 | 4.8 | 4.6 | 4.5 | 4.5 |
| (N) | (22) | (17) | (19) | (21) | (79) |
| Words | 4.0 | 3.5 | 4.0 | 4.1 | 4.0 |
| (N) | (21) | (15) | (19) | (22) | (77) |
| Dance | 4.2 | 3.2 | 3.8 | 3.7 | 3.8 |
| (N) | (19) | (14) | (19) | (16) | (68) |
| Draw | 4.1 | 4.4 | 4.6 | 4.2 | 4.3 |
| (N) | (20) | (14) | (18) | (18) | (70) |
| How To | 4.3 | 4.4 | 4.7 | 4.2 | 4.4 |
| (N) | (22) | (17) | (17) | (22) | (78) |

Rating Scale

1 = Not Like, A Lot

2 = Not Like, A Little

3 = Not Sure

4 = Like, A Little

5 = Like, A Lot

Responses while viewing. There were several instances in the observational records of children expressing, either verbally or behaviorally, evaluative responses to the Play Alongs. These included positive expressions of liking, interest, or amusement or negative expressions of dislike, disinterest or boredom. These responses may also serve as clues to the appeal of the different types of Play Alongs for the children. At the request of NBC, following a report of preliminary findings, they have been coded and analyzed. Evaluative responses were scored along with participation in a Play Along activity such that only one of four possible scores was given. The score was chosen hierarchically, in ascending order, from: no response, negative response, positive response, and participation.

As shown in Table III-12, the percentage of children expressing a positive response varied from a low of 11% for Words to a high of 28% for Fitness, with most percentages averaging around 20%. Only Fitness is remarkable for a high percentage of positve responses, while Faces and Words had the lowest percentage of positive responses. All other Play Alongs fell close together, with around 20% of the children responding positively. There were some age and sex differences in these findings. Younger children responded more positively to Faces and Draw. Older children responded somewhat more positively to Symphony and How To. Older girls responded more positively to Riddles, Words, and Dance.

Appeal of the Play Alongs was also approached from the opposite path, looking at the extent to which they elicited negative rather than positive responses. As shown in Table III-13, many fewer children expressed negative responses to the Play Alongs than expressed positive responses. The percentages range from a low of 0% for Fitness to a high of 10% for Dance, which is just slightly below the smallest percentage of children expressing positive responses

## Table III-12

## Children's Positive Responses to Play Alongs

| % Children Responding Positively During: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Symphony | 26 | 14 | 28 | 19 | 22 |
| (N) | (23) | (14) | (18) | (21) | (76) |
| Fitness | 30 | 27 | 25 | 30 | 28 |
| (N) | (23) | (15) | (20) | (23) | (81) |
| Riddles | 17 | 24 | 33 | 17 | 23 |
| (N) | (24) | (17) | (21) | (23) | (85) |
| Faces | 18 | 24 | 5 | 0 | 12 |
| (N) | (22) | (17) | (21) | (21) | (81) |
| Words | 8 | 7 | 20 | 9 | 11 |
| (N) | (24) | (15) | (20) | (23) | (82) |
| Dance | 22 | 14 | 30 | 12 | 20 |
| (N) | (23) | (14) | (20) | (16) | (73) |
| Draw | 32 | 21 | 15 | 12 | 20 |
| (N) | (22) | (14) | (20) | (16) | (72) |
| How To | 21 | 12 | 28 | 14 | 19 |
| (N) | (24) | (17) | (21) | (22) | (84) |

Positive responses were coded when children expressed, either verbally or behaviorally, liking, interest, or amusement in response to a Play Along.

## Table III-13

## Children's Negative Responses to Play Alongs

| % Children Responding Negatively During: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Symphony | 0 | 0 | 6 | 5 | 3 |
| (N) | (23) | (14) | (18) | (21) | (76) |
| Fitness | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| (N) | (23) | (15) | (20) | (23) | (81) |
| Riddles | 8 | 0 | 10 | 9 | 7 |
| (N) | (24) | (17) | (21) | (23) | (85) |
| Faces | 0 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 1 |
| (N) | (22) | (17) | (21) | (21) | (81) |
| Words | 0 | 7 | 5 | 0 | 3 |
| (N) | (24) | (15) | (20) | (23) | (82) |
| Dance | 4 | 14 | 10 | 12 | 10 |
| (N) | (23) | (14) | (20) | (16) | (73) |
| Draw | 0 | 7 | 5 | 19 | 8 |
| (N) | (22) | (14) | (20) | (16) | (72) |
| How To | 0 | 0 | 0 | 14 | 4 |
| (N) | (24) | (17) | (21) | (22) | (84) |

Negative responses were coded when children expressed, either verbally or behaviorally, dislike, disinterest or boredom in response to a Play Along.

to any one of the Play Alongs. The Play Alongs which received the smallest percentages of negative responses were Fitness, Faces, Symphony, Words, and How To. Those which received the most negative responses were Dance, Draw, and Riddles. There were none which fell in between these two groups. Some of the Play Alongs elicited more negative responses from the older children (Symphony, Riddles, Faces, and Draw) or from the older boys (How To). Boys in general responded more negatively to Draw and Dance than did the girls. There were no Play Alongs that girls responded more negatively than did boys.

These data suggest that the Play Alongs elicited relatively few negative responses from children and several positive responses. Responsiveness or positivity did not depend on the sex or age of the children, but it did vary by the type of Play Along. Fitness is the one Play Along that elicited positive responses from a high percentage of children and negative responses from a low percentage. As will be seen later (see Table III-14), it also elicited a relatively high rate of participation. (All of which stands in contrast to its lower rated appeal.) Symphony should be placed in the middle range for appeal when data on negative evaluations, positive evaluations, and participation are all considered. How To should be placed in the middle range toward being unsuccessful in appeal. The remaining Play Alongs were mixed in the participation, positive responses, and negative responses they evoked. Of those with mixed scores, only Faces can still be said to be an unqualified success in terms of appeal. It elicited negative responses from only 1% of the children and, while it elicited positive responses from only 12% (a low percentage), it elicited participation from 63%. This means it elicited participation or positive responses from 75% of the children. The next closest Play Along was Fitness which elicited such responses from only 56% of the children.

## Table III-14

## Children's Participatory Responses to Play Alongs

| % Children Participating During: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Symphony | 9 | 36 | 16 | 14 | 19 |
| (N) | (23) | (14) | (18) | (21) | (76) |
| Fitness | 39 | 13 | 50 | 9 | 28 |
| (N) | (23) | (15) | (20) | (23) | (81) |
| Riddles | 21 | 6 | 14 | 13 | 14 |
| (N) | (24) | (17) | (21) | (23) | (85) |
| Faces | 50 | 47 | 85 | 71 | 63 |
| (N) | (22) | (17) | (21) | (21) | (81) |
| Words | 21 | 7 | 30 | 22 | 20 |
| (N) | (24) | (15) | (20) | (23) | (82) |
| Dance | 26 | 14 | 50 | 38 | 32 |
| (N) | (23) | (14) | (20) | (16) | (73) |
| Draw | 27 | 7 | 15 | 0 | 12 |
| (N) | (22) | (14) | (20) | (16) | (72) |
| How To | 29 | 6 | 10 | 0 | 11 |
| (N) | (24) | (17) | (21) | (22) | (84) |

Participation was coded when children carried out activities suggested by Play Along or verbally expressed the wish or intent to do so sometime in the future.

Summary. All the appeal data combined suggest several things about the Play Alongs. First, they are attractive to children, not as attractive as the Flintstones cartoons, but more attractive than other drop-ins and much more attractive than commercials. Second, they cannot be considered to be the cause of any loss in audience for the Flintstones Comedy Show. Third, the individual types of Play Alongs differed in the extent to which children said they liked them, made positive or negative evaluative comments while watching them, and stopped or started watching while they were on. These individual differences among the Play Alongs will be discussed more fully in the Conclusions section. Finally, the self-report and observational measures of appeal presented essentially similar results when the Play Alongs as one type of programming were compared to other types of programming, but they presented some different findings when the different types of Play Alongs were compared. These different findings will also be discussed in the Conclusions section where the types of Play Alongs are evaluated for overall performance.

## Impact

The primary purposes of the Play Alongs were to make children's Saturday morning viewing experiences more active and to suggest activities they could pursue sometime after viewing. The extent to which the Play Alongs succeeded in these goals was assessed in three ways. First, children's participation in the Play Alongs was observed during viewing. Second, children were asked to recall Play Along content, describe similar activities participated in at times other than viewing, and estimate their interest in more such activities. Third, family observers were asked to report any conversation or activity by the children which was related to the Play Alongs and occurred at a time other than while viewing.

Participation while viewing. Children were scored as participating in a Play Along while it was being broadcast if they carried out the activity suggested by the Play Along as it was being broadcast. So as not to penalize children who could not carry out the Play Along activity right at that time (because of lack of materials or space or for other reasons), those who, while the Play Along was being broadcast, verbally expressed the wish or intent to perform the activity sometime in the future were also given credit for participation. This choice was made when preliminary data were presented to NBC. Carrying out of the activity included keeping time to Symphony music or imitating the characters, doing a Fitness exercise, guessing at Riddles, guessing at who had scrambled Faces, guessing Words, doing a Dance, Drawing or getting materials or trying to remember instructions, and getting materials or trying to remember instructions for How To make something (see Appendix L for complete description). Most of the Play Alongs elicited one or both kinds of participation from one quarter or less of the children (see Table III-14). Between 10% and 15% of the child viewers participated in Draw, How To, and Riddles, 20% participated in Words, and 28% participated in Fitness. Somewhat more children participated in Dance (32%). But the outstanding eliciter of participation was Faces, with 63% of the children participating in it.

There are some differences among the Play Alongs in how much participation they elicited from younger and older boys and girls. Draw and How To were more effective with younger than older children. Faces, Words, and Dance were more effective with older children. All of the Play Alongs except Symphony were somewhat or markedly more effective with girls than boys. Those for which there was a marked sex difference were Fitness, Words, Dance, Draw, and How To. For Symphony, younger boys participated much more than younger girls, and older boys and girls did not differ in their participation.

Recall. Even though most children did not actively participate in most Play Alongs while they were broadcast, most remembered them. As shown in Table III-15, a very high proportion of all children said they recalled seeing each Play Along. Most children who said they recalled seeing a Play Along could describe its content (see Table III-16).[5] The only Play Along which children did not seem to remember all that well was Riddles. The percentage of children saying they remembered seeing it (72%) was comparatively low, and the percentage of those children who could actually describe its content was even lower (66%). Otherwise, the Play Alongs -- especially Faces, Dance, Draw, and How To -- were very well remembered by the children.

Not surprisingly, more older than younger children generally believed they remembered seeing the Play Alongs. They also were better able to recall what the Play Alongs were about. However, only for Words and Draw was the age difference in actual recall of Play Along content apparent for both boys and girls. For other Play Alongs, the age difference was due to differences in one sex or the other: girls for Riddles and Faces, and boys for Dance. Fitness and How To showed minimal age differences. Only one Play Along showed any sex difference in children's beliefs that they had seen it. Only two Play Alongs showed any sex differences in how well their content was recalled. Girls were more likely to believe they had seen a Fitness Play Along, but -- of the children who said they had seen it -- boys were somewhat more likely to recall its content. Boys were also more likely to recall How To content.

Participation while not viewing. In addition to remembering the Play Alongs well, most children said they had participated in activities similar to them when they were not watching television (see Table III-17). It was not possible to ascertain whether the activities were stimulated by previous viewing of the Play Alongs or occurred just because they are an ordinary part

## Table III-15

## Children's Reported Recognition of Play Alongs

| % Children Reporting Recognition of: | Younger |  | Older |  | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys |  |
| Symphony | 88 | 89 | 95 | 91 | 91 |
| (N) | (24) | (18) | (21) | (23) | (86) |
| Fitness | 92 | 76 | 95 | 74 | 85 |
| (N) | (24) | (17) | (20) | (23) | (84) |
| Riddle | 75 | 65 | 73 | 70 | 72 |
| (N) | (24) | (17) | (21) | (23) | (85) |
| Faces | 92 | 94 | 100 | 91 | 94 |
| (N) | (24) | (18) | (20) | (23) | (85) |
| Words | 88 | 88 | 95 | 96 | 92 |
| (N) | (24) | (17) | (20) | (23) | (84) |
| Dance | 79 | 82 | 100 | 81 | 85 |
| (N) | (24) | (17) | (20) | (21) | (82) |
| Draw | 83 | 82 | 86 | 86 | 85 |
| (N) | (24) | (17) | (20) | (21) | (82) |
| How To | 92 | 100 | 95 | 97 | 95 |
| (N) | (24) | (17) | (19) | (23) | (83) |

Recognition was measured by asking the children whether they remembered seeing each segment, describing the general characteristics of each segment twice, if necessary.

## Table III-16

## Children's Recollection of Play Along Content

| % Children Who Could Recall Content or Message For: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Fitness | 77 | 85 | 79 | 82 | 80 |
| (N) | (22) | (13) | (19) | (17) | (71) |
| Riddle | 50 | 64 | 88 | 63 | 66 |
| (N) | (18) | (11) | (16) | (16) | (61) |
| Faces | 67 | 100 | 95 | 90 | 87 |
| (N) | (21) | (17) | (20) | (21) | (79) |
| Words | 67 | 73 | 95 | 82 | 79 |
| (N) | (21) | (15) | (19) | (22) | (77) |
| Dance | 89 | 57 | 85 | 94 | 83 |
| (N) | (19) | (14) | (20) | (16) | (69) |
| Draw | 86 | 86 | 94 | 94 | 90 |
| (N) | (21) | (14) | (18) | (18) | (71) |
| How To | 73 | 100 | 88 | 95 | 88 |
| (N) | (22) | (17) | (17) | (22) | (78) |

Recollection was measured by asking the children who reported remembering a Play Along to tell about what happened in it, and then evaluating the accuracy of that report. No recall question for the "Symphony" Play Along was asked because we did not judge that the content was of a type which could be verbally described by most children.

## Table III-17

## Children's Reported Participation in Activities Similar to Play Alongs When Not Viewing

| % Children Reporting Participation in Activity Like: | Younger |  | Older |  | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys |  |
| Symphony | 62 | 50 | 70 | 67 | 64 |
| (N) | (21) | (16) | (20) | (21) | (77) |
| Fitness | 89 | 92 | 100 | 82 | 91 |
| (N) | (19) | (13) | (19) | (17) | (68) |
| Riddle | 89 | 91 | 94 | 88 | 90 |
| (N) | (18) | (11) | (16) | (16) | (61) |
| Faces | 39 | 24 | 60 | 57 | 46 |
| (N) | (23) | (17) | (20) | (21) | (81) |
| Words | 89 | 71 | 100 | 91 | 89 |
| (N) | (19) | (14) | (19) | (22) | (74) |
| Dance | 74 | 54 | 70 | 63 | 66 |
| (N) | (19) | (13) | (20) | (16) | (68) |
| Draw | 60 | 69 | 89 | 78 | 74 |
| (N) | (20) | (13) | (18) | (18) | (69) |
| How To | 36 | 65 | 71 | 71 | 60 |
| (N) | (22) | (17) | (17) | (21) | (77) |

Participation when not viewing was measured by asking children whether they ever did anything like the Play Along activities when they were not viewing.

of childhood. At any rate, it is instructive to note that about 90% of the children had participated in activities like those of Fitness, Riddles, and Words. About 75% had participated in activities like Draw. About 60-66% had participated in activities like Symphony, Dance, and How To. Interestingly, only 46% reported previous participation in activities like Faces. Given the popularity and memorability of this Play Along, this small percentage seems to indicate that the measure of previous participation is tapping more about what children normally do than it is about what children have done as a consequence of previous viewing. If the measure tapped activities performed as a consequence of viewing, then many more children than 46% should have reported engaging in an activity as popular as that of Faces was.

Some of the Play Alongs depicted activities which older children were more likely than younger children to have already done. These were Symphony, Faces, Words, Draw, and How To. No Play Alongs showed activities which younger children were more likely to have done. Girls were more likely than boys to have previously done activities similar to those in Faces, Words, and Dance. There were no Play Alongs boys were more likely than girls to have done.

As Table III-17 indicates, the majority of children (except for Faces) believed they had participated in activities similar to those in the Play Alongs at some time before they were given the questionnaire. Family observers did not agree (see Table III-18). Only 14% indicated that children had participated in Play Along activities at some time other than while viewing, and only 11% indicated children had talked about them. These percentages are markedly lower than those obtained from the children.

We believe there are three causes for the disparity in observers' and children's reports of non-viewing participation. First, the question put to the family observers specified Play Along activities only, but that put to

## Table III-18

### Observer's Reports of Children's Participation in and Talk About Play Along Activities When Not Viewing

| % Observers Reporting: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Participation | 11 | 12 | 16 | 16 | 14 |
| Talk about | 11 | 12 | 16 | 5 | 11 |
| (N) | (18) | (17) | (19) | (19) | (73) |

Observers reports of children's participation were measured by asking observers whether the child they observed had engaged in or talked about any of the Play Along activities at any time other than while viewing.

children specified activities like those shown in the Play Alongs. Children could therefore rightly tell us they had guessed at riddles in school, while the family observer would omit this experience because it did not involve Play Along riddles or riddles stimulated by the Play Alongs. Second, the family observers are probably unaware of some of the activities in which children engage. For example, they may not realize that activities like those in Words are common school experiences for children. Third, children probably over-report their experience with activities like those in the Play Alongs. These are three good explanations for the differences between children's and observers' reports. Because of these factors, additional data are needed to establish a conclusive estimate of children's participation in Play Along activities outside of the viewing situation.

Interest in future participation. Whether or not the Play Alongs provoked participation while children were viewing or afterwards, the great majority reported at least some interest in participating in more activities similar to those in the Play Alongs. As shown in Table III-19, at least 70% of all children reported a little or a lot of interest in further activities. Those that provoked more interest were Riddles, Faces, Draw, and How To. Those that provoked less interest were Symphony, Fitness, Words, and Dance. There were few age or sex differences in children's reported interest in further activities similar to those in the Play Alongs. Younger children were somewhat more interested than older children in activities like those in Symphony, Riddles, Words, and How To. Older children were somewhat more interested in activities like those in Draw. The only apparent sex difference was boys' greater interest in activities like those in Riddles. These results demonstrate that the Play Alongs depicted activities which children found interesting enough to want to do more at some future time.

## Table III-19

## Children's Reported Interest in Paticipation in Further Activities Similar to Play Alongs

| % Children Reporting Further Interest In: | Younger |  | Older |  | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys |  |
| Symphony |  |  |  |  |  |
| A Little | 38 | 31 | 75 | 67 | 50 |
| A Lot | 38 | 44 | 20 | 14 | 28 |
| (N) | (21) | (16) | (20) | (21) | (78) |
| Fitness |  |  |  |  |  |
| A Little | 68 | 23 | 37 | 47 | 46 |
| A Lot | 18 | 46 | 47 | 29 | 34 |
| (N) | (22) | (13) | (19) | (17) | (71) |
| Riddle |  |  |  |  |  |
| A Little | 33 | 9 | 56 | 56 | 41 |
| A Lot | 56 | 82 | 38 | 44 | 52 |
| (N) | (18) | (11) | (16) | (16) | (61) |
| Faces |  |  |  |  |  |
| A Little | 26 | 35 | 35 | 50 | 37 |
| A Lot | 57 | 59 | 53 | 40 | 52 |
| (N) | (23) | (17) | (19) | (20) | (79) |
| Words |  |  |  |  |  |
| A Little | 47 | 40 | 58 | 68 | 55 |
| A Lot | 43 | 40 | 37 | 27 | 36 |
| (N) | (21) | (15) | (19) | (22) | (77) |
| Dance |  |  |  |  |  |
| A Little | 37 | 14 | 45 | 44 | 37 |
| A Lot | 37 | 36 | 30 | 31 | 33 |
| (N) | (19) | (14) | (20) | (16) | (69) |
| Draw |  |  |  |  |  |
| A Little | 40 | 43 | 44 | 27 | 39 |
| A Lot | 40 | 43 | 50 | 67 | 50 |
| (N) | (20) | (14) | (18) | (18) | (70) |
| How To |  |  |  |  |  |
| A Little | 45 | 29 | 53 | 47 | 45 |
| A Lot | 55 | 53 | 41 | 48 | 49 |
| (N) | (22) | (17) | (17) | (21) | (77) |

Rating Scale

0 = None
1 = A Little
2 = A Lot

The Play Alongs also gave several children ideas for other activities in which they could engage (see Table III-20). Overall, 79% of the children reported having at least one idea for another activity. The individual Play Alongs varied considerably in the proportion of children in whom they sparked such ideas. Dance sparked ideas in the smallest percentage of children, 28%, and Draw, in the largest, 57%. How To and Fitness sparked ideas in 40% and 45% of the children respectively; the other four Play Alongs sparked ideas in 34-39% of the children. Fitness and How To stimulated ideas from older more than younger children, while Words stimulated them more from younger children. Girls more than boys had ideas for other activities like those in Words and Dance, while boys got more ideas from How To. Older girls were much more likely than other children to have ideas for other activities like those in Draw. Although the percentage of children having ideas varied among the Play Alongs and for some Play Alongs by age or sex of the children, the kinds of ideas they suggested did not differ much. As shown in Table III-21, the kinds of ideas children had for other activities are clearly derivative from the Play Alongs. Based on these data one can conclude that the Play Alongs did give many children ideas for other activities in which they could participate when not watching television.

Summary. Altogether these data on the impact of the Play Alongs suggest that they were a positive experience in children's lives. They presented relatively familiar activities in ways which made them easily remembered. The activities were such that many children were interested in doing similar things at some time other than while watching television, and they stimulated ideas for further activities in about three-quarters of them. They even managed to provoke active participation in 80% of the children sometime during their viewing of the Flintstones Comedy Show.

## Table III-20

## Children's Reports of Play Alongs as Sources of Ideas for Other Activities

| % Children Reporting They Receive Ideas From: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Symphony | 38 | 31 | 35 | 40 | 36 |
| (N) | (21) | (16) | (20) | (20) | (77) |
| Fitness | 36 | 46 | 53 | 47 | 45 |
| (N) | (22) | (13) | (19) | (17) | (71) |
| Riddle | 39 | 30 | 31 | 38 | 35 |
| (N) | (18) | (10) | (16) | (16) | (60) |
| Faces | 41 | 35 | 35 | 43 | 39 |
| (N) | (22) | (17) | (20) | (21) | (80) |
| Words | 48 | 40 | 37 | 14 | 34 |
| (N) | (21) | (15) | (19) | (22) | (77) |
| Dance | 37 | 14 | 30 | 25 | 28 |
| (N) | (19) | (14) | (20) | (16) | (69) |
| Draw | 55 | 50 | 72 | 50 | 57 |
| (N) | (20) | (14) | (18) | (18) | (70) |
| How To | 29 | 41 | 41 | 50 | 40 |
| (N) | (21) | (17) | (17) | (22) | (77) |

Ideas for other activities was measured by asking children who reported remembering seeing each Play Along whether it gave them any ideas for other things to do.

Table III-21

Children's Reported Ideas for Other Activities

Examples of Ideas From:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Symphony | - | play an instrument<br>make an instrument<br>make up own music and play it |
| Fitness | - | doing exercises [general response]<br>do push-ups, jumping jacks, ride bike [specific examples] |
| Riddle | - | make up own riddles |
| Faces | - | make face puzzles<br>make crossword puzzles<br>make puzzles |
| Words | - | make own scrambled words<br>make sentences from words<br>make word puzzles |
| Dance | - | dance [general response]<br>square dance, elephant dance [specific examples]<br>make up own dances |
| Draw | - | draw [general response]<br>draw trains, faces, horse, turkey, Flintstones [specific examples] |
| How To | - | make things [general response]<br>make instruments, buildings, things with sticks, moccasins, music, pictures [specific examples] |

Ideas for other activities were measured by asking the children who reported getting ideas to tell about them. Almost all children who reported getting ideas gave examples (94%). The types of examples were fairly uniform across age and sex groups and were not too surprising. The most common examples are reported in the table.

## Effects of Viewing Frequency and Parental Opinion

The results reported in the previous two sections suggest that at least some of the Play Alongs have the desired appeal and impact. One is tempted to attribute the findings to characteristics of the Play Alongs and the programming which surrounded them, but there are two other factors which may have conbributed to the reported findings. One is the requirement that participating children had viewed the Flintstones Comedy Show prior to participating in this study. This may have biased the sample toward children who liked the series. All other children would have not watched several times and therefore would not be able to participate in the study. A second factor that may have influenced the data is that only those families in which parents (especially the mothers) were positive about the Flintstones and/or the Play Alongs concept would agree to all the work involved in this project. Certainly the monetary incentive was not very large, especially in relation to the number of person hours required. To explore the possible effects of these two factors on the appeal and impact data just reported, several analyses were carried out.

To address the first of these issues some of the data already presented about the appeal and impact of the Play Alongs have been reanalyzed according to observers' reports on a four-point scale of how frequently the child(ren) they observed had viewed The Flintstones Comedy Show on KNBC since September, 1980.[6] Two groups of viewers were created, one composed of those children who were reported to watch the Flintstones about once a month or less (called Infrequent Viewers), and the other composed of children who watched a couple of times a month or more (called Frequent Viewers). The distribution of younger and older girls and boys in each group was roughly equivalent. These groups were then used to reanalyze some of the data on appeal and impact.

Exploring the possibility that the sample of volunteering parents was biased in favor of the Flintstones and Play Alongs concept was more complex. Three approaches were used. One was simply to examine the favorability of comments observers added to the end of their questionnaires to see if the sample was indeed especially positive. In a second approach, a subsample of children of favorably and unfavorably disposed observers was selected. The appeal and impact data of these two groups of children were compared to see if there was a relationship between observers' opinions and children's opinions and behaviors. In a third approach, the data of the entire sample of children were compared to the data from the children of favorable and unfavorable observers to see if the data from the full sample fell more in line with that of children of favorable or unfavorable observers.

Viewing frequency and appeal. By dividing the children into two groups, Frequent Viewers and Infrequent Viewers, it was possible to compare appeal of the Play Alongs and the Flintstones Comedy Show between the two groups of viewers. As Table III-22 indicates, Frequent Viewers tend to like both the Flintstones program as a whole and the Play Alongs better than Infrequent Viewers. This difference is much greater for the entire program than for the Play Alongs.

This suggests two conclusions. First, and most obvious, children who watch the Flintstones Comedy Show on a fairly regular basis like its cartoons and Play Alongs more than those who do not watch regularly. Although these Frequent Viewers do not like the Play Alongs as much as they do the program as a whole, that they continue to be regular viewers indicates that the lesser appeal of the Play Alongs is not preventing them from viewing. The second conclusion suggested by the data is that dislike of the Play Alongs by less

## Table III-22

### Children's Reported Liking of Play Alongs and Flintstones Comedy Show (FSC) By Viewing Frequency

| Average Reported Liking of: | Infrequent Viewers | Frequent Viewers |
|---|---|---|
| Play Alongs | 4.0 | 4.2 |
| FSC | 4.3 | 4.7 |
| (N) | (41) | (42) |

Viewing frequency was reported by observers and measured as:

1 = Just a few times since September

2 = About once a month

3 = A couple of times a week

4 = About once a week

Liking of the Play Alongs and FCS was measured as:

1 = Not Like, A Lot

2 = Not Like, A Little

3 = Not Sure

4 = Like, A Little

5 = Like, A Lot

frequent viewers is probably not related to their viewing pattern. If it were, Infrequent Viewers' liking for the Play Alongs could have been expected to be much lower than it was, reaching at least the same proportional relationship to liking of the Flintstones as that for Frequent Viewers. The proportional difference between liking of the Play Alongs and the Flintstones Comedy Show for Infrequent Viewers is actually less than that for Frequent Viewers, which suggests that lack of appeal of the Play Alongs is probably not a cause for infrequent viewing.

Although stated appeal of the Play Alongs did not seem to be a factor determining viewing frequency, the observational measures of loss of attention and of positive and negative evaluative responses allowed further search for this possibility. Of greatest concern for evaluating the Play Alongs is loss of attention and children's negative responses. It will be recalled that attention loss was calculated as the number of times a child turned his/her attention to another activity during a program element type, divided by the number of times s/he had an opportunity to do so (for that element type), and that negative responses to the Play Alongs were those verbal or behavioral expressions which indicated dislike, disinterest, or boredom. If the Play Alongs were at least partly responsible for decreasing viewing or interest in viewing, then Infrequent Viewers should have more attention loss and negative responses to at least some of the Play Alongs.

Looking at the attention loss data when partitioned by viewing frequency (see Table III-23) it is clear that there were no differences in loss of attention between Infrequent and Frequent Viewers for the Play Alongs or cartoons. There were very slight differences in the Ads and Other (other drop-ins and PSAs), with Frequent Viewers slightly more often directing their attention to something

## Table III-23

## Losing Children's Attention for Different Types of Program Content by Viewing Frequency

| % Children Who Are Watching and Stop Watching During: | Infrequent Viewers | Frequent Viewers |
|---|---|---|
| Play Alongs | 7 | 7 |
| (N) | (40) | (42) |
| Ads | 17 | 15 |
| (N) | (41) | (42) |
| Cartoons | 8 | 8 |
| (N) | (40) | (42) |
| Other | 10 | 13 |
| (N) | (37) | (42) |

else than did Infrequent Viewers for Other and slightly loss often for Ads. The results for each group were virtually identical to the totals for all children, as reported in Table III-3). Of course, the same cautions as advanced earlier (pp. 84-89) must be kept in mind in interpreting the meaning of all these percentage scores, due to differing amounts of broadcast time for each program element. Overall, though, the cartoons and Play Alongs were able to maintain the attention of Frequent and Infrequent Viewers equally, providing further evidence that requiring participating children to have viewed the Flintstones Comedy Show recently probably did not bias findings about appeal of programming.

As Table III-24 indicates, the percentage differences in negative responses of Frequent and Infrequent Viewers are small for all of the Play Alongs. For three of the Play Alongs there are clearly no differences in the percentages of Frequent and Infrequent Viewers making negative evaluative responses. For four there are small differences, with Infrequent Viewers being more negative. For one, Frequent Viewers are more negative. In no case does a percentage difference represent more than three more children expressing a negative evaluation. These results provide further evidence that the Play Alongs are not likely to have caused a decrease in the audience for the Flintstones Comedy Show.

The data for positive evaluative responses (see Table III-25) are somewhat different. Frequent Viewers evidence as many, or more, positive evaluative responses than do Infrequent Viewers. This may reflect the Frequent Viewers' greater familiarity with the Play Alongs, or it may suggest that children who watch more frequently come to like the Play Alongs better (although the self-reported ratings show they like the Play Alongs only slightly more than do the Infrequent Viewers).

## Table III-24

### Children's Negative Responses to Play Alongs by Viewing Frequency

| % Children Responding Negatively During: | Infrequent Viewers | Frequent Viewers |
|---|---|---|
| Symphony | 5 | 0 |
| (N) | (39) | (35) |
| Fitness | 0 | 0 |
| (N) | (37) | (40) |
| Riddle | 8 | 7 |
| (N) | (40) | (41) |
| Faces | 3 | 0 |
| (N) | (38) | (40) |
| Words | 5 | 0 |
| (N) | (38) | (41) |
| Dance | 9 | 10 |
| (N) | (33) | (39) |
| Draw | 9 | 5 |
| (N) | (33) | (38) |
| How To | 0 | 8 |
| (N) | (40) | (40) |

Negative responses were coded when children expressed, either verbally or behaviorally, dislike, disinterest, or boredom in response to a Play Along.

### Table III-25

### Children's Positive Responses to Play Alongs by Viewing Frequency

| % Children Responding Positively During: | Infrequent Viewers | Frequent Viewers |
|---|---|---|
| Symphony | 13 | 34 |
| (N) | (39) | (35) |
| Fitness | 24 | 33 |
| (N) | (37) | (40) |
| Riddle | 13 | 32 |
| (N) | (40) | (41) |
| Faces | 8 | 13 |
| (N) | (38) | (40) |
| Words | 8 | 15 |
| (N) | (38) | (41) |
| Dance | 21 | 26 |
| (N) | (33) | (39) |
| Draw | 6 | 26 |
| (N) | (33) | (38) |
| How To | 18 | 20 |
| (N) | (40) | (40) |

Positive responses were coded when children expressed, either verbally or behaviorally, liking, interest, or amusement in response to a Play Along.

Viewing frequency and impact. As suggested in the introduction to Section III, it was assumed that a fair test of the Play Alongs' ability to evoke participation in child viewers could only be made with children who had some prior familiarity with them. For this reason, we asked parents to volunteer to participate only if their children had watched the Flintstones Comedy Show several times in the recent past. Dividing children into Frequent and Infrequent Viewers provided an opportunity to test the accuracy of this assumption.

As indicated by the data in Table III-26, the assumption is more correct than incorrect. For four of the Play Alongs -- Symphony, Dance, Draw, and How To -- a notably larger percentage of Frequent than Infrequent Viewers participated in their activities. This finding was reversed, but the percentage difference was much reduced, for Fitness and Faces. For the remaining two Play Alongs, Riddles and Words, there were no differences in participation rates of Frequent and Infrequent Viewers. Frequent Viewers were, as hypothesized, more likely to participate in Play Along activities than were Infrequent Viewers.

Observer opinions. All three approaches to ascertaining whether the evaluation of the Play Alongs was biased because of which parents were willing to participate required that parents (or observers) be classified as to their opinions. This was done using the open-ended comments at the end of the observer questionnaire. First, observers were deleted as necessary in cases where they had observed more than one child (see pp. 73-75). Then observers' comments were classified as positive, negative, mixed, and none. The majority (58%) of observers either made no comment at all or expressed both positive and negative opinions. Fifteen percent were primarily positive and 27% primarily negative in their opinions. This is prima facie evidence that the

## Table III-26

## Children's Participatory Responses to Play Alongs by Viewing Frequency

| % Children Participating During: | Infrequent Viewers | Frequent Viewers |
|---|---|---|
| Symphony | 8 | 29 |
| (N) | (39) | (35) |
| Fitness | 30 | 25 |
| (N) | (37) | (40) |
| Riddle | 13 | 12 |
| (N) | (40) | (41) |
| Faces | 66 | 60 |
| (N) | (38) | (40) |
| Words | 21 | 22 |
| (N) | (38) | (41) |
| Dance | 21 | 36 |
| (N) | (33) | (39) |
| Draw | 9 | 24 |
| (N) | (33) | (38) |
| How To | 8 | 15 |
| (N) | (40) | (40) |

Participation was coded when children carried out activity suggested by Play Along or verbally expressed the wish or intent to do so sometime in the future.

sample was not overly biased in favor of the Flintstones or the Play Alongs concept, nor was it overly biased against them.

Despite this reassuring finding, the possibility that observers' opinions were related to children's opinions and behaviors was still examined. To do so a sample of children of clearly positive and clearly negative observers was formed. Since in two age by sex groups the number of observers making favorable comments was only two, the number of positively and negatively disposed observers in each age by sex group was limited to two each. Thus, the comparisons were made between eight children with favorably disposed observers and eight with unfavorably disposed observers. All observers selected or available to be selected, were parents.

There are three factors which make this test of the relationship between observer opinion and child performance a good one. First, the two groups of children were balanced by sex and age. Second, the two groups were approximately equal in the reported frequency of viewing the Flintstones Comedy Show. Third, the opinions utilized to form the two groups of children were those of parents rather than siblings. Since it was parents rather than siblings who consented to have the family participate in the study, groups formed on the basis of parental opinion permit a better test of the possibility that the data reflect biases due to who would consent to participate in the research.

Despite these strengths, there are several reasons to be cautious in interpreting any results which may be found. First, the sample is a small one. Second, it is possible that parental opinions were formed or changed by their children rather than vice versa. Even if it was primarily highly positive parents who agreed to participate -- and we know it was not -- they could have become positive because their children were positive. Given the correlational nature of our data, there is no way to determine -- should observer opinion and child opinion and behavior be found to be related -- who influenced whom. Third, it is possible that parental opinion changed as a consequence of having observed the child watch the Flintstones Comedy Show and having administered the questionnaire to him or her. Since the parental opinions were provided only after all these activities were completed, we cannot be certain that the opinions were the same as those which would have been expressed at the time the parent agreed to participate in the study. With all these caveats in mind, let us turn to the findings of the second and third approaches for assessing the possibility the evaluation data are biased.

Observer opinion and appeal. Examination of children's appeal ratings indicated that there was some relationship between observers' opinions and children's stated liking of the Play Alongs and the Flintstones Comedy Show. Children questioned by a positive observer obtained mean liking scores of 4.7 for the Play Alongs and 4.9 for the Flintstones on a five point scale. Children questioned by a negative observer obtained scores of 3.8 and 4.0 respectively. Thus, children of more positive parents were themselves more positive about the Flintstones and the Play Alongs.

A comparison of these scores to those obtained from the entire sample of 86 children is instructive. Appeal ratings for the entire sample were 4.1 for the Play Alongs and 4.4 for the Flintstones, on the same five point scale. The 4.4 rating for the Flintstones is virtually in the middle between the 4.0 rating from children with negative observers and the 4.9 rating from children with positive observers. The same is true of the 4.1 rating of the Play Alongs by the entire sample. If one assumes that all children's ratings were correlated with the observers' opinions, as apparently were those in the subsample of

16 analyzed here, one would then have to conclude that the total Play Alongs evaluation sample is relatively balanced among observers who were positive, negative, neutral, and mixed about the Flintstones and the Play Alongs. How else can one explain the fact that the appeal ratings by the entire sample fall right in between those from children of highly positive observers and those from children of highly negative observers? Certainly the data do not suggest that the sample was drawn entirely from families in which the parents were rabidly pro(or con) the Flintstones and the Play Alongs concept.

While the finding indicates that children's ratings of the appeal of the Flintstones and the Play Alongs and their observers' apparent opinions covary, three qualifications should be kept in mind. First, there are only eight children in each group, so the means reported in the table are less stable estimates than one would wish. Second, the measures of appeal were self-reports in response to questioning by the observer, a situation which may encourage children to reflect what they perceive to be the observers' opinions. Third, children may have influenced observers' opinions of the Play Alongs and the Flintstones, not the other way around.

To gain a clearer impression of how observers' attitudes might be influencing the children, the scores for attention and evaluative responses were examined for the same sample. These observational measures tell a somewhat different story. As indicated in Table III-27, a marginally larger percentage of children observed by favorably inclined people stopped watching each type of program element than did their counterparts. As the differences are not large and the sample is small, this finding should be conservatively interpreted as suggesting that observers' attitudes toward programming do not seem to be related to children's attention to that programming while viewing.

## Table III-27

## Loss of Attention by Children of Observers Who Liked And Did Not Like Play Alongs and The Flintstones

| Average % Children Who Stop Watching During: | With Positive Observers | With Negative Observers |
|---|---|---|
| Play Alongs | 9 | 6 |
| Ads | 17 | 12 |
| Cartoons | 9 | 5 |
| Other | 14 | 5 |
| (N) | (8) | (8) |

To further explore the relationship between observers' attitudes and the appeal of the Play Alongs to children, the negative and positive responses of each group while viewing were compared (see Table III-28). Again assuming negative responses to be especially critical, since they may indicate a loss of audience, it can be seen that there is only a small difference between the two groups. Ten percent of the children of negative observers express negative evaluations during the Play Alongs and six percent of children of positive observers do so. There is a somewhat larger difference between the groups' positive evaluative responses, with children observed by favorably people exhibiting more behavior which indicated favorable evaluative responses to the Play Alongs. The average percent of positive responses to all Play Alongs for the entire sample is 19% to which the score for children of positive observers is clearly closer than the score for children of negative observers. The percent of negative responses for the sample is 4%, which is less than either group. The actual frequency of negative responses by the sub-sample is so low that an increase or decrease of one child could make a noticeable difference in the average percent reported in Table III-28. This requires that the two groups' scores be treated as similar, and not far removed from the entire sample.

Observer opinion and impact. The data presented in Table III-28 indicate that children with parent observers who were more favorably disposed to the Flintstones and Play Alongs were more likely to participate in the Play Along activities. Comparing the percentage of children participating when their observers were positive or negative to the percentage of children in the entire sample who participated in Play Along activities, it is apparent that children of positive parents were closer to the participation average for the entire sample (25%) than were those of negative parents.

## Table III-28

## Participation in Play Along Activities by Children of Observers Who Liked and Did Not Like Play Alongs and The Flintstones

| Average % Children Across All Play Alongs Showing: | With Positive Observers | With Negative Observers |
|---|---|---|
| Negative response | 5 | 10 |
| Positive response | 21 | 10 |
| Participatory response | 27 | 17 |

Again it should be noted that the number of children in the sub-sample is small, so the percentages are not as stable as one would like. For this reason, and since positive parent comprised a smaller proportion of all the observers than negative parents, it seems appropriate to look at the findings for positive responses and participation as indicating that the sample as a whole falls between the two extremes, rather than being clearly biased in favor of the Play Alongs and Flintstones.

Summary. Tentatively, then, the data indicate that the two factors of viewing frequency and family opinions could influence data like that obtained in this study of the Play Alongs' appeal and impact. As compared to Infrequent Viewers, Frequent Viewers liked the Flintstones and the Play Alongs better and they participated in the Play Alongs more. Yet Infrequent Viewers evidenced no greater loss of attention or negative responses to the Play Alongs than did Frequent Viewers. As compared to children whose observers held negative opinions of the Flintstones and Play Alongs, children whose observers held positive opinions liked the Flintstones and Play Alongs more and participated in the Play Alongs more. However, they also stopped watching more often. Despite the evidence that viewing frequency and observer opinion can be related to appeal and impact measures, there is no indication that either factor operated in the present study to invalidate the findings that (1) the Play Alongs are unlikely to cause or have caused children to stop watching the Flintstones Comedy Show, and (2) the sample of children and families was not biased in favor of the Flintstones and the Play Alongs.

## Problems and Improvements

However appealing and impactful the Play Alongs might be, it seemed likely that there would be some room for improving them, either individually or as a group. To this end several potential problem areas were addressed by questions in the Child and Observer Questionnaires. These issues included whether the Play Alongs are too fast, whether Draw and How To require materials which are not easily available, whether the Play Alongs are not easily distinguishable from the rest of the Flintstones Comedy Show programming, and whether they require too much attention on the part of children. Observers were also given an opportunity to comment evaluatively on several aspects of the Play Alongs in a section asking their opinions of possible improvements of the Play Alongs.

Pace. Asked whether the Play Alongs were paced too fast, too slow, or about right, most observers (56%) said they were about right (see Table III-29). However, most of the remaining observers (43%) thought that the Play Alongs were too fast. Not surprisingly, more observers of younger children thought the Play Alongs were too fast-paced than did observers of older children. There were no strong differences in the opinions of those who observed boys and those who observed girls. Although such a large proportion of observers expressing the opinion that the Play Alongs are paced too fast is some cause for concern, it is of course children who constitute most of the audience for the Flinstones Comedy Show. Their judgments of each individual Play Along must be considered also.

The data reported in Table III-30 indicate that a greater proportion of children judge the Play Alongs to be paced at the right speed than do observers. Looked at individually, there is a fairly substantial range between the Play Along most often judged to be too fast (the construction part of How To -- 38%) and the Play Along least often judged to be too fast (Faces -- 7%). Only for Faces do more children judge it to be just right. Symphony and Fitness also evoke comparatively few judgments of being too fast, though interpreting these

## Table III-29

## Observers' Judgments of Speed of Play Alongs

| % Observers Judging Play Alongs To Be: | Younger | | Older | | All |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | Childre |
| Too fast | 56 | 53 | 33 | 29 | 43 |
| Too slow | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| (N) | (18) | (17) | (18) | (17) | (70) |

## Table III-30

## Children's Judgments of Speed of Play Alongs

| % Children Judging Play Alongs To Be: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Symphony | | | | | |
| Too fast | 14 | 19 | 20 | 10 | 15 |
| Too slow | 0 | 0 | 10 | 10 | 5 |
| (N) | (21) | (16) | (20) | (21) | (78) |
| Fitness | | | | | |
| Too fast | 17 | 17 | 16 | 18 | 16 |
| Too slow | 18 | 0 | 11 | 12 | 11 |
| (N) | (22) | (12) | (19) | (17) | (70) |
| Riddle | | | | | |
| Too fast | 17 | 27 | 38 | 27 | 27 |
| Too slow | 0 | 9 | 0 | 7 | 3 |
| (N) | (18) | (11) | (16) | (15) | (60) |
| Faces | | | | | |
| Too fast | 9 | 6 | 10 | 5 | 7 |
| Too slow | 17 | 12 | 15 | 14 | 15 |
| (N) | (23) | (17) | (20) | (21) | (81) |
| Words | | | | | |
| Too fast | 16 | 50 | 42 | 23 | 32 |
| Too slow | 21 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 7 |
| (N) | (19) | (14) | (19) | (22) | (74) |
| Dance | | | | | |
| Too fast | 26 | 36 | 25 | 29 | 29 |
| Too slow | 0 | 7 | 5 | 0 | 3 |
| (N) | (19) | (14) | (20) | (17) | (70) |
| Draw | | | | | |
| Too fast | 19 | 50 | 28 | 22 | 28 |
| Too slow | 10 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 4 |
| (N) | (21) | (14) | (18) | (18) | (71) |
| How To (1) | | | | | |
| Too fast | 32 | 29 | 35 | 18 | 28 |
| Too slow | 5 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 3 |
| (N) | (22) | (17) | (17) | (22) | (78) |
| How To (2) | | | | | |
| Too fast | 43 | 31 | 41 | 36 | 38 |
| Too slow | 5 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 3 |
| (N) | (21) | (16) | (17) | (22) | (76) |

The "How To" Play Alongs occur in two separate parts, the first telling children what materials they will need for the project, and the second what to do with the materials.

figures is difficult since Symphony makes fewer self-evident demands on the viewer than do the other Play Alongs, and Fitness was not especially well-liked (see Table III-11). The remaining Play Alongs -- Riddles, Words, Dance, Draw, and the How To instructions for getting materials -- all are reported to be too fast by slightly fewer than a third of the children. While such a proportion is not vast, it and the judgments of observers suggest that slowing down the Play Alongs might be desirable.

The three Play Alongs which the smallest percentages of children rate as too fast -- Faces, Symphony, and Fitness -- reveal very little variation between children of the different age and sex groups. The Dance Play Along, although rated by almost a third of the children as being too fast, also showed only minor variation between the different age and sex groups. For Riddle, the percentage of younger girls who find it too fast is less than half the percentage of older girls who find it so (17% to 38%); boys fall in between the extremes and remain constant across ages (27%). The responses to Words and Draw were similar to each other and somewhat difficult to explain. In both cases 50% of the younger boys found the Play Alongs too fast, while only 16-19% of the younger girls did. For older boys and girls, the relationship was reversed and the difference between them reduced to 6%. Finally, girls more often than boys found both portions of the How To Play Along too fast. For the introductory segment, the difference between younger boys and girls was small while that for older boys and girls was larger. The reverse was true for the segment which gave the actual instructions about how to make something.

It is difficult to make any broad generalizations about these results. It appears, though, that as the Play Alongs differ in the amount of mental or physical action necessary to participate, so do the judgments of whether they are too fast. Thus, the How to Play Along in which directions are given for construction of some object requires children to think about or manipulate a number of materials in relation to each other in a particular sequence, all of which may be new ideas. It was likely to be judged too fast by children. Faces, on the other hand, presents one object (a face), which is probably already familiar to children, in a puzzle format with which most children are likely to have had some experience. It was unlikely to be judged too fast. Future Play Alongs could be paced with even more consideration given to what they are asking of children. If, however, a single guideline were chosen for all Play Alongs, it would be to never go faster and to try to slow them down a little.

Availability of materials. The Drawing and How To Play Alongs require various materials (paper, pencil, glasses, popsicle sticks, etc.) if children are to participate in the activity being described. There was some concern that at least some of the materials might not be readily available to some children. Asked whether the Play Alongs required materials children were likely to have nearby, 47% of the observers indicated that the children were not likely to have the materials (see Table III-31). About a third of the observers of younger children endorsed this view, but observers of older children were more varied, with about half the observers of older boys and about three-fourths the observers of older girls agreeing that materials were unavailable.

Since children's perceptions of the availability of materials are likely to influence their attempts to participate in the Play Alongs requiring them, children were questioned about Draw and How To materials, separately. As can be seen in Table III-31, slightly more than two thirds of the children reported that they did not have things for drawing nearby. This proportion is fairly constant for all age and sex groups, though girls tend to report materials being

## Table III-31

## Observers' and Children's Judgments of Availability of Materials for Play Alongs

| % Observers Reporting Materials Generally Unavailable for Play Alongs: | Younger |  | Older |  | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys |  |
| Observers | 33 | 31 | 74 | 47 | 47 |
| (N) | (18) | (16) | (19) | (17) | (70) |
| **% Children Reporting Materials Unavailable For:** |  |  |  |  |  |
| Draw | 70 | 64 | 72 | 67 | 69 |
| (N) | (20) | (14) | (18) | (18) | (70) |
| How To | 67 | 50 | 45 | 43 | 51 |
| (N) | (21) | (16) | (20) | (21) | (78) |

unavailable slightly more often than boys. For the How To, about half the children reported materials to be unavailable, with only younger girls substantially above that figure (67%).

That children should report materials were unavailable in at least as great a percentage as did observers is not too surprising. Most observers were parents and therefore more likely to know whether materials were genuinely available and whether they would permit children to use them. That a higher percentage of children thought materials were unavailable for Draw than for How To is somewhat surprising, since the Draw Play Alongs primarily require only pencils and paper. The higher percentage for Draw may be due to the wording of the question on the questionnaire, children's belief that they were supposed to be drawing while the Play Along was being broadcast, or some other reason. Regardless of the measured difference in the availability of materials for Draw and How To, that nearly half the children found both Play Alongs required unavailable materials is some cause for concern.

Distinguishable as program elements. Since the Play Alongs require more active involvement from viewers than the other programming on the Flintstones Comedy Show, some recognition that the Play Alongs are not "just another cartoon or commercial" may be important if children are to participate. If the Play Alongs cannot be distinguished from cartoons or commercials, then children may be less likely to participate in them.

Observers were asked whether the Play Alongs were easily distinguished from the regular program content and ads. In Table III-32 it can be seen that observers reported that children could more easily distinguish the Play Alongs from commercials than from the regular program content. In both cases observers judge that older children make the distinctions better than younger children, and there is a tendency to report that boys make the distinctions better than girls.

## Table III-32

### Observers' Judgments of Play Alongs As Not Easily Distinguished by Children From Other Program Content

| % Observers Reporting Play Alongs As Not Easily Distinguishable by Children From: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Flintstones Comedy Show | 56 | 44 | 37 | 35 | 43 |
| Ads | 39 | 31 | 26 | 18 | 29 |
| (N) | (18) | (16) | (19) | (17) | (70) |

To gain some measure of children's ability to distinguish between the Play Alongs and other program elements, they were asked to label the Play Alongs. The results in Table III-33 indicate that, consistent with observer reports, children tended to label the Play Alongs as cartoons more often than ads. However, the frequency with which they did either is less than the observers seemed to expect. While it may be that the categories of "Games" and "Something Else" to which 76% of the children assign the Play Alongs are not sufficiently well-defined to be considered appropriate labels, the Play Alongs were nonetheless not usually confused with either ads or cartoons when children were asked to tell what kind of content they are. As might be expected by observers, older children less often labeled the Play Alongs incorrectly than did younger children. Unlike observers' expectations, girls tended to label the Play Alongs as cartoons more often than boys, and as ads less often than boys.

These data suggest that children understood the Play Alongs are distinct from the cartoons and commercials with which they are broadcast. The data say nothing about children's ability to distinguish Play Alongs as they are actually being broadcast. If it is this experience that observers had in mind when 43% of the them estimated that children confused the Play Alongs with cartoons, then that might explain the difference between the data from children and observers. Observers may have watched children have some difficulty distinguishing Play Alongs as they are broadcast and so responded that, indeed, many children would have difficulty telling Play Alongs from commercials and cartoons.

If this were the correct explanation for the disparity in children's and observers' data, then one would experct observers to report that the Play Alongs required too much attention from children. As the data in Table III-34 show, this is not the case. Eleven percent of the observers felt the Play Alongs

## Table III-33

## Children's Perceptions of Play Alongs as Discrete Program Elements

| % Children Describing Play Alongs As: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Cartoons | 30 | 13 | 11 | 5 | 15 |
| Games | 22 | 38 | 44 | 45 | 37 |
| Ads | 9 | 19 | 0 | 5 | 8 |
| News | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 1 |
| Something Else | 39 | 31 | 44 | 41 | 39 |
| (N) | (23) | (16) | (18) | (22) | (79) |

## Table III-34

## Observers' Judgments of Attention Required by Play Alongs

| % Observers Judging Attention Required By Play Alongs To Be: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Too much | 28 | 18 | 21 | 12 | 20 |
| Too little | 11 | 12 | 11 | 12 | 11 |
| (N) | (18) | (17) | (19) | (17) | (71) |

required too little attention, 69% felt they required the right amount, and 20% felt they required too much. Although one-fifth of the observers felt the Play Alongs required too much attention, and percentages were again greater for younger than older children and for girls than boys, 20% is not high enough to explain the observers' opinions that it was difficult for children to distinguish the Play Alongs from ads and cartoons. Therefore, there is little indication now that children had excessive difficulty distinguishing the Play Alongs from their broadcast environment. At the same time, an observational assessment of children's ability to distinguish the Play Alongs as they are broadcast may be in order before any conclusions are reached about their distinctiveness for children.

Observer evaluations and suggested improvements. At the end of the Observer Questionnaire, participants were given an opportunity to evaluate the major concepts of the Flintstones Comedy Show. Specifically, they were asked how good an idea they felt it was to broadcast the Play Alongs, to broadcast segmented programs like the Flintstones Comedy Show, and to opt in the future for programs with longer stories and fewer segments. Using a five point scale, observers indicated they felt the Play Alongs were a very good idea, segmented programs were a moderately good idea, and longer stories with fewer segments were something they were unsure about (see Table III-35). Observers of older children were somewhat more favorable toward segmented programs, while observers of younger children were somewhat more favorable toward longer stories and fewer segments -- just the opposite of the common wisdom about what to produce for older and younger children. There were no differences in observers' opinions about the desirability of the Play Alongs for younger and older children. Finally, there were no differences at all in the opinions of observers of girls and boys.

Table III-35

Observers' Evaluation of Flintstones Comedy Show Characteristics

| Average Evaluation By Observers For: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Play Alongs | 4.67 | 4.47 | 4.53 | 4.50 | 4.54 |
| (N) | (18) | (17) | (19) | (18) | (72) |
| Segmented Programs | 4.11 | 4.00 | 4.42 | 4.37 | 4.23 |
| (N) | (18) | (17) | (19) | (19) | (73) |
| Long stories/few segments | 3.22 | 3.29 | 3.00 | 2.95 | 3.11 |
| (N) | (18) | (17) | (19) | (19) | (73) |

Rating Scale

1 = A very bad idea

2 = A moderately bad idea

3 = Not sure

4 = A moderately good idea

5 = A very good idea

Despite the fact that observers were quite favorable toward the idea of including the Play Alongs in the Saturday morning schedule, they did endorse some of the improvements suggested to them as possibilities. As reported in Table III-36, the most frequently endorsed ideas for improving the Play Alongs were to make sure needed materials are available (endorsed by 67% of observers), to present longer Play Alongs (65%), to repeat ideas more (56%), and to present ideas more slowly (54%). The remaining suggested improvements of presenting fewer ideas, presenting shorter Play Alongs, and grouping the Play Alongs together were not endorsed by even one quarter of the observers.

There were some differences in the improvements observers were likely to endorse for younger and older children. As might be anticipated, observers were more likely to feel that ideas should be presented more slowly, that there should be fewer ideas, and that they should be repeated for younger viewers. For older viewers, observers were more likely to feel that the Play Alongs could be shorter, although it is still a very small percentage of observers who advocate this. Observers of older girls were more likely to endorse making sure that materials were available than observers of any of the other age by sex groups. Observers were never more likely to endorse an improvement for boys than girls, but they did endorse three more for girls than for boys: present ideas more slowly, repeat ideas, and make sure needed materials are available.

Summary. The various findings on possible problems with and improvements for the Play Alongs indicate first and foremost that the Play Alongs were regarded as basically successful the way they are. Observers even rated them as a very favorable element in Saturday morning programming. This does not mean observers -- and children -- did not see some ways in which the Play Alongs might be improved. However, their suggestions were minor not major.

## Table III-36

## Observers' Ideas for Improving Play Alongs

| % Observers Endorsing the Following Changes: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Present ideas more slowly | 61 | 56 | 58 | 42 | 54 |
| Present fewer ideas | 11 | 13 | 11 | 5 | 10 |
| Repeat ideas | 72 | 63 | 58 | 32 | 56 |
| Present longer Play Alongs | 67 | 81 | 68 | 47 | 65 |
| Present shorter Play Alongs | 0 | 0 | 5 | 11 | 4 |
| Group Play Alongs Together | 28 | 13 | 16 | 26 | 21 |
| Make sure needed materials are available | 61 | 56 | 84 | 63 | 67 |
| (N) | (18) | (16) | (19) | (19) | (72) |

Observers' ideas for improving the Play Alongs were measured by asking them to check off those they endorsed from the list presented in the table.

The most consistently indicated problem with the Play Alongs was the availability of materials for the Draw and How To segments. Children never had the materials at hand to participate while the activity was being broadcast, and they rarely had what was necessary to write notes about instructions or materials for later use. Indeed, many of them are not that skilled in writing. This is probably an issue that programming needs to confront. If children really are to participate while the Draw or How To segments are being broadcast, then much more attention will have to be given to getting the materials together in front of the set and to slowing down the presentation to a rate at which children can actually participate. If children are only to have ideas about how to draw or make something later, then attention needs to be given to emphasizing essential materials and actions and helping children commit them to memory.

A second common suggestion for improvement was to slow down the pace of the Play Alongs. While this suggestion was more commonly given by observers than by children, by observers of younger than older children, and for some Play Alongs than for others, it is still a suggestion that bears serious consideration. Particularly if programming is striving for participation in activities such as Riddles, Words, Draw, and How To, the presentation probably needs to slowed down (and perhaps repeated).

Other than these two suggestions, there is little that was consistently recommended as improvements to the Play Alongs. These two problems of materials and pace will be no surprise to programming. They are exactly the concerns highlighted when the evaluation began. All that the data have done is confirm that they are issues which have not been totally successfully resolved in this season's Play Alongs.

## Conclusions

The results which have just been presented demonstrate that the Play Alongs achieved several things. They stimulated children to perform such activities as guessing riddles, finding short words in longer ones, unscrambling a face to identify who it is, dancing, and moving rhythmically to music. These activities took place during what would have otherwise been a more passive television viewing experience. In addition, the Play Alongs piqued children's interest in performing these activities at a later time and gave them ideas for other related things they could also do. All this was achieved without causing children to stop watching the Flintstones Comedy Show.

The activities which the Play Alongs chose to present were apparently common activities in children's daily lives. Most reported that they had engaged in them before. Such familiarity did not seem to make children bored with them. Indeed, 80% participated in the activities of one or more Play Alongs as they were being broadcast and 79% reported obtaining ideas from them for activities they could perform after viewing.

Greater familiarity with a Play Along activity may usually lead to greater participation in it. This is suggested by the finding that children who were more frequent viewers of the Flintstones Comedy Show were also more likely to participate in Play Along activities while they were being broadcast. An alternative explanation for this finding -- that children who enjoy participation activities on television watch the Flintstones more -- seems unlikely. This is because, although both Frequent and Infrequent Viewers liked the Flintstones best and the Play Alongs next best, the difference in liking the two types of programming was greater for the Frequent than Infrequent Viewers. This finding argues against the alternative explanation and therefore leaves more likely the possibility that more frequent exposure to the Play Alongs leads to greater participation in their activities.

Having said that the Play Alongs provoked some activity in child viewers, one hastens to add that they did this without apparently losing any audience for the Flintstones Comedy Show in which they appeared. Several findings support this conclusion. Only one child switched channels away from KNBC while a Play Along was being broadcast, none did it while cartoons were being broadcast, but seven did it while commercials were being broadcast. Children were about as likely to stop watching television entirely (and usually only temporarily) while the Play Alongs were being broadcast as when the Flintstone cartoons were being broadcast. They were less likely to stop watching at these times than when commercials, other drop-ins, and public service announcements were being broadcast. They made few negative evaluative responses while the Play Alongs were being broadcast. Finally, more frequent viewers -- who also said they liked the Play Alongs and the Flintstones better -- were not less likely to stop watching the Play Alongs or the Flintstones cartoons than were less frequent viewers. All these findings support the conclusion that the Play Alongs were unlikely to have caused any decrease in the audience for the Flintstones Comedy Show.

At the same time, several lines of evidence suggest that they were unlikely to have increased the Flintstones Comedy Show audience. Children who were not watching television were more likely to resume viewing when the Play Alongs were on than when commercials, other drop-ins, and public service announcements were on, but children were most likely to resume viewing when cartoons were being broadcast. This effect should probably not be attributed primarily to the fact that cartoons are broadcast more of the time but rather to their greater appeal. This greater appeal is most evident in children's ratings of how much they liked the cartoons, Play Alongs, and commercials and their rankings of these three types of content. Both measurement techniques made it clear that the cartoons were most appealing to children, the Play Alongs second in appeal, and the commercials a distant third. Thus, while the Play Alongs do not seem to lose any audience for the Flintstones Comedy Show, they are not the most appealing element in it either.

The discussion so far has focused on the Play Alongs as a single type of programming rather than on the eight different types of Play Alongs produced. This has been appropriate since NBC's major questions were the extent to which the Play Alongs provoked participation in children and did not cause them to stop watching the Flintstones Comedy Show. Having answered these questions, we may proceed to search for the most successful Play Alongs. To do this, each Play Along was rated on a four-point scale for each of several dependent measures from the evaluation. The ratings were done informally by the senior investigator. The three junior authors concurred with them. The results are shown in Table III-37.

Faces is the one type of Play Along which stands out from the others as most successful. It was well liked, attracted children's attention, and was never associated with a loss of attention. Children were extremely likely to participate in guessing whose face it was, to remember having seen it, and to recall whose face was shown. They were also quite interested in participating in similar activities at a future time. There were only two areas in which Faces scored lower than other Play Alongs. One was the extent to which children had participated in a similar activity at an earlier time -- which hardly seems like a negative aspect of the Play Alongs. The other was the extent to which children made positive evaluative responses while it was

## Table III-37

## Investigator's Ratings of Each Play Along's Performance

| | APPEAL | | | | | | PARTICIPATION | LEARNING | | FUTURE INTEREST | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | No Attention Loss | Attention Gain | No Negative Response | Positive Response | Rated Liking | Not Too Fast | Participation | Recognition | Recall | Earlier Participation | Interest in Later Participation | Other Ideas for Activi |
| Symphony | 0 | - | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | + | NA | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fitness | - | - | + | + | - | 0 | + | 0 | 0 | + | 0 | 0 |
| Riddles | - | + | - | 0 | 0 | - | - | - | - | + | + | 0 |
| Faces | + | + | + | - | + | + | ++ | + | + | - | + | 0 |
| Words | + | + | 0 | - | 0 | - | 0 | + | 0 | + | 0 | 0 |
| Dance | + | - | - | 0 | - | - | + | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | - |
| Draw | 0 | - | - | 0 | + | - | - | 0 | + | 0 | + | + |
| How To | - | + | 0 | 0 | + | - | - | + | + | 0 | + | 0 |

Rating Scale

++ = Very High
+ = High
0 = Medium
- = Low
NA = Not Applicable

being broadcast. As explained earlier, the infrequency of such responses should probably be discounted. Since 63% of all children were actually participating in this Play Along, few could be scored as making a positive evaluative response. Thus, the scrambled Faces Play Along is clearly a star performer on all counts.

While not as completely successful as Faces, Words and Symphony can also be considered reasonably successful Play Alongs. Symphony attained moderate scores on all variables except children resuming viewing while it was being broadcast (for which it was performed less well than other Play Alongs) and children believing they had earlier seen such a Play Along (for which it performed bettern than other Play Alongs). Symphony can be thought of as the "old dependable Play Along" -- nothing flashy but also nothing disastrous. Words, on the other hand, was more variable in its performance, although overall it should be judged as performing well. It did especially well in retaining children's attention and in returning attention to the television set and moderately well in rated liking and not evoking negative responses from viewers. It was more likely to be judged as too fast paced and to evoke few positive evaluative responses from children. In all measures of impact -- children remembering it, participating in it, and being interested in future participation -- it performed moderately well to very well.

At the opposite end of overall performance is Riddles. They were probably the least appealing and impactful of the Play Alongs. Children were more likely to stop watching and to make negative evaluative responses while they were broadcast. Rated liking for them and the proportion of children making positive evaluative responses while they were being broadcast were both moderate. Children were likely to feel they were too fast paced. The only appeal measure on which Riddles did well was the frequency with which children resumed viewing while they were being broadcast. In terms of impact, Riddles were not well remembered by the children nor did they provoke much participation. Perhaps their relatively fast pace, the lack of any real introduction to get children's attention to the riddle, and the absence of any clues before the right answer was given contributed to the lack of participation. Children were likely to report having participated in guessing riddles prior to viewing and being interested in future participation in this activity.

The four Play Alongs which have not been discussed -- Fitness, Dance, Draw, and How To -- were quite mixed in their overall performance. How To's and Draw's major "failings" were in pace and participation, but one must decide what these Play Alongs can and should be expected to do before one can talk about these as real failings. Draw, but not How To, had more trouble in attracting children to the screen and not eliciting negative comments from viewers. Fitness' and Dance's problems were primarily in the area of appeal, with several measures indicating they were less appealing to children than were other Play Alongs.

As NBC staff anticipated, all the Play Alongs were more likely to seem too fast rather than too slow. Observers especially felt that they could be slowed down. The majority of children believed that they were fine at their present pace, but those who suggested a change almost always recommended that they be slower. In particular, Riddles, Words, Dance, Draw, and How To were likely to be judged too fast by larger proportions of children. A decision to slow these or other Play Alongs down must, of course, be made in conjunction with decisions about the extent to which appeal may be lessened with a slower pace and about the real goals for the Play Along. For instance, if the real goal of the Drawing Play Alongs is to have children draw along with the Play Along, then significant changes in format and pace will have to be made.

As NBC staff also anticipated, there were problems with the availability of materials necessary for the Draw and How To Play Alongs, at least as far as children and observers were concerned. Many of the How To segments required materials which would not be immediately available in a household. Thus, informing children of the necessary materials and then returning later to show what to do with them cannot be successful strategy for insuring that children have the necessary materials with them when the how-to part of the Play Along is broadcast. A similar strategy of telling children early to get drawing materials should, however, work for the Drawing Play Along. Virtually all households will have paper and pencil or crayon which children can go and get.

The findings of the Play Alongs evaluation are derived from several types of data -- observations of children's naturally occuring behaviors in their homes, children's responses to questionnaires, parental or sibling reports of children's behaviors at times other than the observation, and parental or sibling evaluations of program content. This reliance on several types of data provided by different people strengthens considerably the conclusions which can be drawn from the study. While being observed -- even by a parent or sibling at home -- is likely to produce some constraints on behavior, it is still a procedure which provides more obviously valid measures of some important variables than will exclusively interview data. Moreover, the frequency with which children stopped watching the television set for some period of time indicates that the constraints they did feel from being observed were not all that great.

The major concerns about the Play Along data focus on potential biases in the sample. The requirement that participating children had viewed the Flintstones Comedy Show recently may have slanted the sample toward those who liked it best. The several activities required of participating families and/or the information in the letter requesting participation may have slanted the sample toward those who were most positive about the Flintstones or the concept behind the Play Alongs. As reported earlier, several analyses were conducted to explore the legitimacy of these two concerns.

More frequent viewers said they liked the Flintstones and Play Alongs better than did less frequent viewers. However, both sets of viewers liked the Flintstones better than the Play Alongs and the magnitude of this difference in liking was greater for the more frequent viewers not the less frequent viewers as one might expect. Also, the frequent viewers were only somewhat less likely to make negative evaluative responses to the Play Alongs, and they averted their attention from the Play Alongs, cartoons, and ads at the same rate as did infrequent viewers. These findings suggest that the sample was not biased in such a way that it would show the Play Alongs were not responsible for audience loss when a random sample would show they were responsible. A random sample of children would, however, be likely to show lower rates of participation in the Play Along activities. This conclusion is based on the finding that frequent viewers participated more in Play Along activities and the assumption that a random sample would have overall lower viewing frequencies than did the sample in this study.

To explore the possibility that families which agreed to participate in the project were biased in favor of the Flintstones or Play Alongs, three separate types of analyses were conducted. None of them indicated that the sample was so biased. Ratings of observers' comments at the end of their questionnaires indicated that almost 60% were mixed in their opinions or sufficiently disinterested to append no comments whatsoever. Of the remaining 42%, more observers were clearly negative than positive about the series and drop-ins.

Subsequent comparisons of children of these extreme groups of parents indicated that there were some correspondences between their opinions and the children's opinions and behaviors. However, the direction of influence -- parents to children or children to parents -- could not be determined from the data and good arguments could be made for either direction of influence. Moreover, data from the entire sample ordinarily fell between the scores of children from the two extreme groups of observers. Finally, the one major lack of correspondence is crucial: Children of positive observers were more -- not less -- likely than children of negative observers to stop watching both the Flintstones and the Play Alongs. Thus, the several comparisons suggested that the sample of participating families was not overly biased in favor of the Flintstones and Play Alongs. Moreover, such biases, where they existed, could not account for the finding that the Play Alongs did not cause children to stop watching the Flintstones Comedy Show.

In addition to these concerns about the quality of the data base, there are aspects of its quality which are not questioned. One, which has already been mentioned, is the use of measures of children's actual behavior. Another is assessing behavior in a normal viewing environment with familiar people around. A third is the use of both the child and a responsible sibling or parent for information about the child and for opinions about how to improve the Play Alongs. A fourth is the use of several types of measurement techniques with the children. A fifth is assessing children's behavior and opinions after they had been exposed to several episodes of the Flintstones Comedy Show. A sixth is aggregating data across all children from several different episodes of the Flintstones Comedy Show. A seventh is assessing children's opinions individually rather than in groups. An eighth is recruiting children from several sources which differed in geographic location within the greater Los Angeles area and in ethnic, social class, and religious mix. And a ninth is having a great many different people participate as observers and experimenters. Altogether these factors make one more confident that the findings are likely to represent what children feel about and do in relation to the Flintstones Comedy Show and the Play Alongs in it.

Bearing in mind these aspects of the evaluation process, certain conclusions seem warranted. The Play Alongs are unlikely to have caused any loss of audience for the Flintstones Comedy Show. Some Play Alongs are more attractive to children than others, and all of them except Faces could probably be slowed down a little. Altogether the Play Alongs managed to provoke some active participation by slightly more than three-quarters of the child viewers. They also piqued their interest in engaging in similar activities in the future and provided them with ideas for things to do when they were not watching television.

## IV. HOW TO WATCH TV

The How to Watch TV programming consists of short segments designed as drop-ins to the Saturday morning schedule. It has been produced by Newell & Yohe for both the 1979-80 and 1980-81 seasons. The segments are designed to teach children about television -- how programming is produced, special effects, how programming is financed, the purpose of advertising, how to respond to advertising, planning time for watching television and other chores, and the like. Each segment runs 30 seconds, is self contained and addresses one idea. Live actors, usually Lenny Schultz, act out the idea and state it. Each segment ends with a visual and audio presentation saying "There's a smart way to watch TV."

Each Saturday morning a few How to Watch TV segments are included in the schedule. None is included during the Flintstones Comedy Show. One is included during the non-program minutes of Drawing Power. One or more others appear during a typical Saturday morning. Each segment produced in 1980-81 aired more than once this season. The How to Watch TV drop-ins produced for the 1979-80 season were also aired on Saturday morning, two or more drop-ins per morning, each one aired more than once during the season. They were re-broadcast during the 1980-81 season.

The primary goal of the How to Watch TV drop-ins was to aid children in becoming more critical consumers of television content. To that end it was intended that children be able to recognize the main ideas of the How to Watch TV drop-ins when they were presented in a post-viewing test and be able to recall some of these ideas on their own. Ideally, these messages would be about things children did not already know, things they felt curious about and judged worth learning.

In addition to these issues about the impact of the drop-ins and children's judgments of their worth, there was interest in children's opinions about what type of content the drop-ins were and what types of television content the drop-in ideas applied to. Because the drop ins are short like ads, humorous like entertainment, and informative like education and because most young children do not yet hold the concept of public service announcements, they are likely to have a variety of concepts about what the drop-ins are. These concepts may influence how children respond to the drop-ins. For instance, if they believe they are commercials, they may take them less seriously than if they believe they are instruction.

Children also may not be entirely certain whether the How to Watch TV messages apply only to Saturday morning programming, the only time they are broadcast, or to all television programming. Obviously the potential impact of the drop-ins is greater if children recognize that their messages apply to all programming, not just to Saturday morning children's programming.

All these issues about impact of the How to Watch TV drop-ins and about children's interpretation of them were addressed in this study. Methods used in the evaluation are described in the next section, followed by the report of results.

## Method

Data on the How to Watch TV drop-ins were obtained as part of the evaluations of Drawing Power and the Flintstones Play Alongs. The samples, procedures, stimuli, and instruments for these two evaluations have been fully described in preceding sections of this report (for Drawing Power see pp. 7-18; for the Play Alongs see pp. 71-81 ). Only the most basic details will be repeated here.

## Participants

Most of the data examining the How to Watch TV drop-ins was obtained from children participating in the Drawing Power evaluation. There were 94 such children, ranging in age from 5 to 12, with a mean age of 7.8 years (see Table II-1). The sample was about evenly divided by sex and age (older and younger) and mixed by ethnicity and social class. All the children attended an afterschool care or supervised playground program where viewing and testing occurred. Of the total sample of children, 71% were present and tested at both of the two test periods. There is no obvious explanation for why some children appeared for only one testing.

Children participating in the Play Alongs evaluation provided data on recall of the How to Watch TV drop-ins. There were 86 such children, ranging in age from 5 to 12, with a mean age of 8.6 (see Table III-1). The sample was about evenly divided by sex and age and mixed by ethnicity and social class. Children and their families were recruited primarily through public and private schools.

## Procedures

The procedures for the Drawing Power sample were as follows: Children would watch one episode of Drawing Power on Day 1, watch another episode on Day 2, watch one episode of the New Fat Albert Show on Day 3, fill out a questionnaire and respond to a short interview on Day 4, and on Day 5 watch a third episode of Drawing Power, fill out a questionnaire, and (for about half the children) complete an interview (see Figure II-1). For about half the children one other prosocial program was viewed on one or more of Days 1, 2, and 3. Each Drawing Power episode tested, of which there were four, had a different How to Watch TV segment in it. Many children had also seen How to Watch TV segments in their home viewing of Saturday morning programming. Data on the How to Watch TV drop-ins were obtained in the questionnaire and interview administered on Day 4 and in the questionnaire administered on Day 5.

The procedures for the Play Alongs sample were quite different. Participating children were all reported by parents to have viewed at least a few episodes of the Flintstones Comedy Show in the two months before testing. These children then watched one or two more episodes of the Flintstones Comedy Show in their own homes as the show was broadcast Saturday morning. Parents or other responsible adult or teenage family members observed children during the broadcast. Afterward the observers administered a questionnaire to the children. This child questionnaire was the only source of data about the How to Watch TV drop-ins that were gathered from the Flintstones sample.

## Stimuli

As previously stated, the Flintstones Comedy Show included no How to Watch TV drop-ins, and Drawing Power had one. Thus children in the Play Along sample saw no drop-ins when doing the viewing this study required of them. Children in the Drawing Power sample saw as many as four drop-ins, one in each of four episodes taped off the air exactly as they were broadcast. The drop-ins were about planning time to watch television, why commercials are broadcast, the fact that it is a good idea to have different kinds of people on television, and the fact that animals do not really die on television. Appendix B describes these drop-ins and all the elements of the episodes in which they appeared.

It was assumed that many children would have seen these or other How to Watch TV drop-ins on their own, especially since the drop-ins had been broadcast for two seasons. For this reason, we asked children in the Play Alongs sample about the How to Watch TV drop-ins even though they did not see them while completing the viewing for this project. If children had seen the drop-ins during their normal television viewing, they could reflect that in their answers in the questionnaire. Data from both the Play Alongs and Drawing Power samples indicated that children had indeed been exposed to more How to Watch TV drop-ins than our experimental procedures provided for.

### Instruments

Information about the How to Watch TV drop-ins was elicited by interview and questionnaire as part of the evaluations of Drawing Power and the Play Alongs. The children who participated in the Drawing Power evaluation were asked in the first questionnaire (Day 4) if they recalled ever having seen something about "how to watch TV" (see Appendix C). In a subsequent interview, all those who indicated they did recall the drop-ins were asked to describe what they remembered (see Appendix E). Children were prompted to give as much description and as much summary of the ideas behind each drop-in as possible. On Day 5 of the Drawing Power procedures, children responded to several questionnaire items about the How to Watch TV drop-in they had just seen. The questions were all of the Yes-No and multiple choice type and were placed at the end of the questionnaire (see Appendix D). The children who participated in the Play Alongs evaluation were asked two questions about the drop-ins at the end of the questionnaire administered by the parent or other responsible family member. The first question asked if children recalled ever having seen anything about "how to watch TV" or "there's a smart way to watch TV." Those who answered yes were then asked to describe everything they remembered (see Appendix J).

## Results

The findings about the impact of the How to Watch TV drop-ins will be presented in four sections. First, findings about children's beliefs that they had seen the drop-ins and their recall of the content will be discussed. Second, findings will be presented about children's ability to recognize the main points of the four drop-ins viewed just before testing. Third, findings will be presented about children's judgments as to whether they already knew the information the drop-ins presented, were curious about it, and considered it worthwhile. Finally, children's judgments about what kind of content the drop-ins were and the type of programming to which their information applied will be summarized.

### Recall

Children from both the Drawing Power and Play Alongs samples were asked if they recalled having seen something on television about "how to watch TV" or a "smart way to watch TV." Children in the Drawing Power sample were asked this twice. The first time they had been exposed to one, two, or three drop-ins sometime in the three days preceding testing. The second time they had been exposed to one drop-in as part of viewing Drawing Power on the same day the testing was done. None of the children in the Play Alongs sample were exposed to the drop-ins during the viewing they did as part of this research. Children in both samples could have seen the drop-ins at sometime during their natural viewing of NBC Saturday morning programming over the past two seasons. Based on these opportunities for viewing, we would expect that some of the children in both samples would report having seen How to Watch TV segments. Based on television viewing related to this project, more children should report seeing

How to Watch TV segments in the Drawing Power sample than in the Play Alongs sample. Within the Drawing Power sample, more children should report having seen the drop-ins when they were tested soon after viewing one than when they were tested several days after viewing one.

As shown in Table IV-1, the percentage of children believing they had seen something on television about how to watch it does increase as the likelihood of having recently seen a drop-in increases. Sixty-five percent of the children who were questioned after watching the Flintstones Comedy Show believed they had seen the drop-ins, while this belief was held by 82% of the children who were questioned a few days after having viewed one and 86% of the children who were questioned right after viewing one. In general, older children were more likely than younger children to believe they had seen such drop-ins. Boys were much more likely than girls to believe they had seen them.

To assess how much children who said they had seen something about how to watch television actually had appropriate content in mind when they answered the question, all those who said they had seen such programming were questioned about its content. Children questioned after viewing the Flintstones and those questioned a few days after viewing Drawing Power episodes with a drop-in inserted were asked to recall How to Watch TV content and describe it to the researcher. Children questioned right after viewing Drawing Power and the drop-ins were tested for their recognition of the drop-in's message. Results of the test of recognition will be presented in the next section. Results of the recall test are presented here.

As is usually the case for both children and adults, many children who claimed to have seen programming about how to watch television could not describe

### Table IV-1.

### Children's Reports That They Remember Seeing How to Watch TV Content

| % Children Reporting They Had Seen Something About How to Watch TV: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Flintstones sample | 46 | 71 | 64 | 82 | 65 |
| (N) | (24) | (14) | (22) | (22) | (82) |
| Drawing Power sample tested 2 days after viewing | 65 | 81 | 86 | 95 | 82 |
| (N) | (17) | (21) | (22) | (19) | (79) |
| Drawing Power sample tested right after viewing | 80 | 95 | 73 | 95 | 86 |
| (N) | (20) | (22) | (22) | (19) | (83) |

any of it to the researcher (see Table IV-2). Only 30% of the Flintstones sample who claimed to have seen such programming could actually describe any How to Watch TV content. More of the children in the Drawing Power sample who said they had seen such content could actually describe it (62%). Given that children in the Drawing Power sample had all recently seen at least one drop-in, it is not surprising that they were more able to recall appropriate content than were children in the Play Alongs sample. In general, older children who said they had seen such programming were more likely to recall some of it than were younger children. Boys and girls did not differ overall in their recall, but younger boys recalled more than younger girls and older girls recalled more than older boys.

The ideas which children recalled were examined to see what they were and how they varied by the age and sex of the children recalling them (see Table IV-3). The number of children in the Drawing Power sample was sufficiently large to break their responses down by age and sex. The number in the Flintstones sample was too small to do this. The number of ideas recalled by individual children ranged from 0-4, with children in the Drawing Power sample offering more than did children in the Play Alongs sample. The average number of ideas given by children was 0.9 for the Flintstones sample and 1.2 for the Drawing Power sample. Of these, a smaller number was judged to be correct ideas from the How to Watch TV drop-ins (0.3 for the Flintstones sample and 0.8 for the Drawing Power sample). Older children were likely to give more ideas and more correct ideas than were younger children, and girls were likely to do both more than were boys.

Children offered ideas from nine How to Watch TV drop-ins, even though they had only seen four as part of the experimental procedures (see Table IV-4).

### Table IV-2

### Children's Description of How to Watch TV Content

| % Children Able to Describe Any Appropriate Content When They Said They Had Seen How to Watch TV Drop-Ins: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Flintstones sample | 21 | 36 | 36 | 27 | 30 |
| (N) | (11) | (10) | (14) | (18) | (53) |
| Drawing Power sample | 45 | 50 | 84 | 61 | 62 |
| (N) | (11) | (16) | (19) | (18) | (64) |

## Table IV-3

### Number and Correctness of Ideas Children Recalled about How to Watch TV (Drawing Power Sample Only)

| | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Mean number of ideas recalled | 1.3 | 0.9 | 1.6 | 1.0 | 1.2 |
| Range | 0-3 | 0-2 | 0-4 | 0-3 | 0-4 |
| Mean number of correct ideas recalled | 0.6 | 0.4 | 1.4 | 0.7 | 0.8 |
| Range | 0-2 | 0-2 | 0-3 | 0-3 | 0-3 |
| (N) | (16) | (21) | (20) | (19) | (76) |

## Table IV-4

## Children's Recall of Ideas From Specific How to Watch TV Segments

| | Animals | Plan Time | Toy Ads* | Cat* Wall | Jump* Stunt | Fake* Fights | Flying | Different People | Not* Live in TV | Why Ads on | Smart Way |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Number of correct ideas recalled | 9 | 9 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 12 |
| Number of incomplete or incorrect ideas recalled | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

*Produced for 1979-1980 season

The two most frequently recalled had both been viewed by children in the Drawing Power Sample. However, one of the drop-ins which children had viewed as part of the Drawing Power evaluation, was never mentioned by any children. This was one about why there are commercials on television. A measure of the "staying power" of the drop-ins is the number of drop-ins mentioned which were only seen by children during their normal home viewing. It is impressive that such short segments are still remembered by the children. It is also notable how many children remembered the slogan "There's a smart way to watch TV." Giving children the idea that there are smart and not-so-smart ways to watch television is a desirable contribution to their ideas about the medium and how to use it.

## Recognition of Main Points

Children's ability to recognize the main point of a drop-in was assessed with those who had just seen an episode of Drawing Power which included one How to Watch TV drop-in. All those who said they remembered having just seen something about how to watch television were asked to select the correct description of the main point of that drop-in from among three possibilities. As previously described in Section II on Drawing Power, the episode tested was rotated across four sites. This means that the recognition measure is an aggregate for four different How to Watch TV drop-ins.

As shown in Table IV-5, 61% of the children correctly selected the appropriate description for the drop-in. Many more older than younger children and more girls than boys were able to select the correct alternative from among the three proposed. Younger boys performed no better than chance on this item, and older boys performed only about as well as did younger girls. This suggests, as did the data on number of ideas and number of correct ideas

## Table IV-5

## Children's Understanding of How to Watch TV Messages

| | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| % Children Correctly Identifying Message Over 4 Segments | 69 | 33 | 80 | 63 | 61 |
| (N) | (16) | (21) | (20) | (19) | (76) |

| | Animals | Why Ads | Plan Time | Different People |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| % Children Correctly Identifying Message For Each Segment Tested | 83 | 60 | 58 | 52 |
| % Children Stating They Already Knew Message For Each Segment Tested | 67 | 65 | 68 | 60 |
| (N) | (12) | (20) | (19) | (25) |

recalled (see Table IV-3), that more attention needs to be given to how to communicate the How to Watch TV ideas effectively to boys, especially younger ones.

Examination of the recognition scores for the four drop-ins tested shows that the one about animals not dying in television programs was better understood than the other three (see Table IV-5). It is possible that this result is due to the fact that most children already knew that animals do not really die on television while fewer knew the main ideas in the other three drop-ins (plan time for television and chores, why ads are on television, and it is good to have different kinds of people on television). However, the data do not bear this out. For each drop-in, roughly the same percentage of children said they already knew the idea it presented. Naturally, not all the children who said they already knew the idea correctly identified it in the recognition test. But the proportions of children doing this were about the same for the four drop-ins.

We believe a more likely cause for the differences in recognition scores is the way in which ideas were presented in the four drop-ins. Of the four, only the one about animals not dying delivers the message with clear and complete visual images, as well as with an explanation in the audio track. Children of the ages tested in this evaluation are quite likely to learn more or understand better when ideas are presented visually as well as verbally. So it is likely that differences in the extent to which main ideas were presented visually in the drop-ins contributed to differences in how well children understood them.

## Evaluations of the Drop-Ins' Messages

A third aspect of the evaluation was an assessment of the worth of the How to Watch TV messages from the children's point of view. Children were asked whether the drop-in they had just viewed presented a new idea, and if so, if they had ever wondered about it. All children were also asked if they thought the idea was worth presenting on television.

As shown in Table IV-6, 64% of the children believed that they already knew the information presented in the drop-in they had just viewed. Older more than younger children and girls more than boys were likely to feel they already knew it. There was no indication that any particular drop-in was more or less likely to have been known already either by all children combined or by children divided by age and sex. These data indicate that many children believed they learned something new from the How to Watch TV drop-ins. This is certainly laudable. It is also laudable to remind children about worthwhile ideas they already know, as the drop-ins did for a majority of the children tested. As data presented next demonstrated, children too judged the How to Watch TV ideas to be worthwhile.

As indicated in Table IV-6, 54% of the children who said they did not already know a drop-in's information indicated that they had wondered about it. Also, 81% of all children felt that the drop-ins' information was worth knowing (see Table IV-6). These data indicate that 5-12 year old children are likely to find the ideas presented in the How to Watch TV drop-ins to be interesting and to judge them to be worth knowing. This is true for children who believed they did not already know the information and for those who believed they did.

## Application of the Drop-Ins' Messages

The How to Watch TV drop-ins were produced to teach children about television. Because this was their goal, it was important that children not dismiss them as simply entertainment or advertising. Yet it is possible that children

Table IV-6

Children's Opinions of Novelty and Worth of How to Watch TV Messages

| | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| % Children Who Already Knew Message | 62 | 52 | 75 | 68 | 64 |
| (N) | (16) | (21) | (20) | (19) | (76) |
| % Children Wondering About Message When Didn't Already Know It | 71 | 40 | 20 | 83 | 54 |
| (N) | (7) | (10) | (5) | (6) | (28) |
| % Children Saying Message Worth Knowing | 87 | 76 | 80 | 84 | 81 |
| (N) | (15) | (21) | (20) | (19) | (75) |

might see them as either entertainment programming or commercial advertising. The characteristics that would make them seem like commercials are that they are short like commercials and inserted during commercial breaks. The characteristics that would make them seem like programming are that they feature one of the main characters of Drawing Power and they occur back-to-back with entertainment programming. Moreover, they do not obviously hawk a product. With these factors in mind, all children were asked a multiple choice question about what the How to Watch TV drop-ins were -- ads, part of the program, or something else. Data presented in Table IV-7 show that 51% of children believed the drop-ins were commercial advertising. The remaining children were about evenly split between believing they were part of the program and something else. There were no consistent differences by age or sex in these beliefs. This finding suggests that children, believing the How to Watch TV drop-ins are like commercials, may grant them less credibility than they would if they understood their true intent.

A second aspect of successfully teaching children about television is having them understand that the How to Watch TV messages apply to all television programming not just to programming braodcast Saturday morning when the drop-ins are broadcast. To assess the extent to which children understood this, they were asked whether the idea in the drop-in they had just seen was true for all television programming or just for Saturday morning programming. The majority of the children (74%) understood the How to Watch TV ideas applied to all programming (see Table IV-7). At the same time it should be noted that the younger children's responses are not that much above guessing probability. Older children were more likely to understand that the ideas applied to all programming, and, girls were more likely than boys to understand that.

## Table IV-7

## Children's Understanding of the Nature of How to Watch TV Segments

| % Children Saying How to Watch TV Is: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Ad | 50 | 57 | 60 | 37 | 51 |
| Part of program | 25 | 14 | 25 | 37 | 25 |
| Something else | 25 | 29 | 15 | 26 | 24 |
| % Children Saying How to Watch TV Applies To: | | | | | |
| All TV programming | 69 | 62 | 90 | 74 | 74 |
| Saturday morning programming only | 31 | 38 | 10 | 26 | 26 |
| (N) | (16) | (21) | (20) | (19) | (76) |

## Conclusions

The How to Watch TV drop-ins clearly made a positive contribution to children's television viewing experiences. They presented information children judged to be worthwhile, whether or not they believed they already knew it, and adults certainly judge the information to be beneficial for children. The information is presented in such a way that children could understand and remember much of it. Also, most children recognized that the information applied to all television programming, not just to that broadcast on Saturday morning. Finally, the drop-ins seem to be interesting to and considered worthwhile by children within the entire 6-11 year old targe audience for Saturday morning network programming.

Certain drop-ins were more understandable to and better remembered by children. Although it is not possible to be certain which characteristics differentiate these drop-ins from the others, it is likely that their explicit visual presentation of the main idea contributed a great deal to their intelligibility and memorability. Future drop-ins should strive to select as main ideas those which can be presented visually, as well as verbally, and to find the most explicit visual presentation possible for each idea selected. Children within the entire 6-11 year old Saturday morning target audience, and especially those eight and under who in the present evaluation were less successful in understanding and remembering the drop-ins, profit most from a concrete, explicit visual presentation of ideas.

In addition to choosing visual ways to present ideas in future drop-ins, creators probably need to provide children with more indication about what the drop-ins are. Many children who participated in this evaluation believed the drop-ins were like commercial advertisements. This impression is undoubtedly fostered by the facts that the drop-ins are short like commercials and are inserted during commercial breaks. There is a possibility that children who regard the drop-ins as being like commercials will grant them somewhat less credibility than they would if they understood the drop-ins were intended to inform accurately -- not to persuade without necessarily having the children's best interests in mind. Drop-ins which are produced in the future would probably benefit from informing children about their essential purpose.

Aside from these two suggestions about presenting ideas visually and making the purpose of the drop-ins clear, there is little further to recommend as changes in the drop-ins. Everyone agrees they are beneficial for children. They presented new ideas to some children and reminded other children of important ideas. Finally, children were able to incorporate some of the drop-in ideas into their understanding of television and how to use it wisely.

# V. HOW CHILDREN THINK AND FEEL ABOUT PROSOCIAL PROGRAMMING: A PILOT STUDY

A small, independent study was carried out by one of the research assistants on the project, Catherine Doubleday, with 17 children from the Drawing Power sample. This study served as preliminary research for Catherine's doctoral dissertation and was designed to explore children's understanding of and emotional responses to a specific kind of prosocial television programming for children, namely, programming with an emotional content (also called affective content). Children's opinions about prosocial programming in general were also examined.

Although precise definitions of "affective content" or "emotional content" on television for children have yet to be coined, there is a growing consensus of what this category of programming includes. Generally "affective content" refers to television programming aimed at enhancing children's experiences with affect or emotion including such things as 1) the recognition and labeling of emotion, 2) the meaning associated with specific emotions, 3) the social and personal consequences of the expression of different emotions, and 4) the feeling component of interpersonal relationships.

In this study, children were interviewed about two different types of affective content on television. The first type was a 1-3 minute segment, animated or with live actors, generally inserted in a 30 minute to 60 minute prosocial program for children. In this case, children were questioned about three such segments taken from two different Drawing Power episodes (including program and nonprogram content). These segments were chosen because they dealt with specific feelings and the problematic consequences of their occurrence and/or expression in certain social situations. The segments also suggested means of resolving the personal and social conflict created by these feelings. The other type of "affective content" considered was the longer 30 to 60 minute dramatic format found in family shows or children's specials that deals more extensively with interpersonal problems and relationships. Questions about these two types of "affective content" were in addition to questions asked about children's perceptions of prosocial programming in general.

## Method

There were 17 children in the sample, including four older boys (aged 9-11), five older girls (aged 9-10), four younger boys (aged 6-8), and four younger girls (aged 6-8). Children were of mixed ethnic and social class backgrounds and were drawn from the Drawing Power samples at our four afterschool center sites. No attempt was made to randomly select children due to the preliminary nature of the study and the limited availability of children for this part of the research.

A 15-20 minute interview was administered individually to each child. This was conducted at the afterschool centers on the last day (Day 5) of interviewing for Drawing Power. All NBC data were collected, and then Catherine conducted as many interviews for her project as time allowed. She also returned to one of the afterschool programs one week after the conclusion of the Drawing Power research to conduct a few more interviews for her study.

The interview was divided into three parts (see Appendix N). In the first part (Part A, Items 1-8) children's abilities to discriminate between prosocial and general entertainment programming (using Drawing Power as the example of a prosocial show) were assessed. In these items, children were also asked for their perceptions of producers' intent for prosocial programming. That is, they were asked whose idea it is to have prosocial programs on television for kids and the reasons those people want prosocial children's shows on television. In the second part (Part A, Items 9-18), children were asked about what they learn from family shows and children's afterschool and weekend specials and what their affective responses are to this kind of programming. Finally, in the third part (Part B), children's learning from and emotional responses to short, affective segments from Drawing Power (including one commercial) were examined.

For Part B, one of three different segments from two Drawing Power episodes was played back to each child on a videocassette monitor. These segments had been edited onto a videocassette master from our Drawing Power tapes. The segments included on Superperson U segment, one Turkey of the Week segment, and one McDonald's commercial (to include an "affective segment" with live actors). Order of presentation was not randomized, again due to the small number of children and the preliminary nature of the study. Instead, the first child saw the first segment, the second child saw the second segment, and so forth. After viewing one of the three segments, each child was then asked a series of questions about his/her learning from and emotional responses to what he/she had seen.

The Superperson U segment was about a super hero, Super Shoes, who taught a little troublemaker, Spike, what it felt like to be in his "victim's" shoes. The Turkey of the Week segment was about Dirty Harry and how he learned that caring about himself and keeping clean made other people care about him too. Finally, in the McDonald's commercial, a boy named Jim moves from the country to the city. Jim's feelings of sadness and loneliness at his new school in the city are portrayed, and, finally, his happiness when some new friends ask him to join them at McDonald's for a hamburger.

In the reporting of the results for the second and third parts of the questionnaire in the results section, the reader will notice that there is some missing data for some of the items. This begins with data in Table 19. Since data for this study were collected at the very end of the day at the afterschool center sites, some children were picked up by their parents before the interview was completed. Some missing data is also due to experimenter error. In the instances where sample size is markedly reduced for these reasons, it will be noted as the results are reported.

## Results

Frequency tables were computed for each item of the questionnaire by age and sex of subjects, and a comparison of the frequencies was then made. The results of these analyses will be presented below. It should be reiterated that this was a pilot study and that the sample was quite small. So all results, and especially age and sex differences, must be taken as suggestive at best.

### Concepts of Prosocial Programming

In general, from the first part of the questionnaire (Part A, Items 1-8), it appears that the children in this sample had little trouble in making a decision about the type of children's programming they believed Drawing Power represents. They also had little trouble discussing how it was like programs they perceived as similar to Drawing Power or different from programs they considered to be different. Further these children could articulate the program cues they used to make these discriminations. However, as adults, we might disagree with the actual decisions made and the reasoning behind those decisions.

In discriminating Drawing Power as either a prosocial program (a program that tries to teach you something important) or a general entertainment program (a program that is just for fun) in an open-ended and close-ended question, the children were about evenly split between these two choices (see Tables V-1&2). There were no age or sex differences for these findings. Only two children, in the open-ended question for this issue, spontaneously offered that Drawing Power was both prosocial and fun. Both children were in the older group. Children who thought Drawing Power was a prosocial show unanimously thought it was like other prosocial shows because of the messages conveyed in it ("things to try," "things you should do," "it tries to help you") (see Table V-3). Children who thought Drawing Power was a program that was just for fun thought it was like other general entertainment programs mostly because of the cartoons and also because of the characters and stories in Drawing Power. Younger children especially focused on the cartoons as the basis for making this decision (see Table V-4).

Children who thought Drawing Power was different from other prosocial programs cited, primarily, the humor ("it's funny") and the cartoons as the reason Drawing Power was not prosocial (see Table V-5). Also, children who thought Drawing Power was different from other general entertainment programs all mentioned something about messages or Drawing Power teaching things that just-for-fun programs do not ("programs for fun don't have education in them," "it doesn't have dumb cartoons," "they tell you what's happening in the world") (see Table V-6). These explanations did not differ by age or sex.

## Table V-1

### Children's Open-Ended Answers for Classifying Drawing Power as a Program Type

| Number of Children Classifying Drawing Power as: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Educational | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 4 |
| For fun or funny | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 4 |
| Both educational and for fun | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Cartoon program | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Good or regular program | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Don't know | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| (N) | (4) | (4) | (5) | (4) | (17) |

# Table V-2

# Children's Close-Ended Answers for Classifying Drawing Power as a Program Type

| Number of Children Classifying Drawing Power as: | Younger |  | Older |  | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys |  |
| A program that tries to teach you something important | 2 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 9 |
| A program that is just for fun | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 7 |
| The news | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| (N) | (4) | (4) | (5) | (4) | (17) |

### Table V-3

### Children's Answers for How Drawing Power is Like Other Prosocial Programs

| In Making Comparison, the Number of Children Using: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| The messages in Drawing Power | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 8 |
| Didn't know what alike | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| (N) | (2) | (2) | (4) | (1) | (9) |

## Table V-4

### Children's Answers for How Drawing Power is Like Other General Entertainment Programs

| In Making Comparison, the Number of Children Using: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| The cartoons in Drawing Power | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| The characters in Drawing Power | 0 | 1[*] | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| The stories in Drawing Power | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Didn't know what alike | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| (N) | (2) | (2) | (1) | (2) | (8) |

[*] This child also answered "the cartoons in Drawing Power," so has been entered twice in table.

## Table V-5

## Children's Answers for How Drawing Power is Different From Other Prosocial Programs

| In Making Distinction, the Number of Children Using: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Drawing Power is funny | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| Drawing Power has cartoons | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Drawing Power has "everything" (for fun + prosocial) | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Drawing Power has real people | 0 | 1* | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Didn't know what different | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| (N) | (2) | (2) | (1) | (3) | (9)** |

---

*This child also answered "Drawing Power has everything," so has been entered twice in table.

** Total N also includes response from older boy who thought Drawing Power was most like the news.

Table V-6

Children's Answers for How
Drawing Power is Different
From Other General Entertainment Programs

| In Making Distinction, the Number of Children Using: | Younger | | Older | | All |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | Children |
| Drawing Power teaches | 2 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 10 |
| Drawing Power has real people | 0 | 0 | 1[*] | 0 | 1 |
| Drawing Power has real things | 0 | 0 | 1[*] | 0 | 1 |
| (N) | (2) | (2) | (4) | (2) | (12)[*] |

[*] This child also answered that "Drawing Power teaches" so has been entered in the table three times.

[**] Total N includes response from older boy who thought Drawing Power was like the news.

In one last question that dealt with this distinction, children were asked how they know programs are prosocial or just for fun (see Table V-7). Some of the children gave more than one answer to this question. Many of the children (especially older girls) reported that they could tell the difference between the two types of shows based on the characters. An equal number of children reported using the messages conveyed as a cue in making this distinction. There were no age or sex differences in the frequency of reporting messages as cues. Older children, especially boys, also used humor and jokes to make their decision and younger children (no sex differences) used the cartoons. Finally ten children indicated that their feelings about a program were a source of information regarding whether a program is prosocial or for fun. However, this question about using one's feelings as a cue was asked separately. Therefore, children's responses mentioning feelings as cues were not offered spontaneously.

In the close-ended question already discussed, which asked children to tell what kind of program Drawing Power is most like, a third type of program was given as a choice -- the news. Since only one child (an older boy) thought Drawing Power was most like the news ("because the Book Reporters has anchormen"), this finding will only be mentioned in passing. However, it is interesting to note that all the children as a group reported eleven different cues or ways in which they can tell that Drawing Power is different from the news (see Table V-8). This includes more than one response given by some children and was at least double the number of cues used in the prosocial/for fun discrimination. (Older girls offered the largest number of different cues in making this distinction.) The finding presumably indicates that the news distinction is a much easier or more obvious one to make. However, messages, humor/jokes, and

## Table V-7

## Program Cues Used by Children to Make Prosocial/For Fun Distinction

| Number of Children Who Spontaneously Mentioned: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Characters | 0 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 7 |
| Messages | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 7 |
| Cartoons | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| Humor/jokes | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 4 |
| Text, titles | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| (N) | (4) | (4) | (5) | (4) | (17) |
| **Number of Children Who Answered They Did Use as a Cue:** | | | | | |
| Their feelings | 1 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 10 |
| (N) | (4) | (4) | (5) | (4) | (17) |

N.B.: Column totals for the spontaneously mentioned cues are larger than N's because some children gave more than one answer to this question.

## Table V-8

## Children's Answers for How Drawing Power is Different From the News

| | In Making Distinction, the Number Children Using: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| MESSAGES | Drawing Power doesn't tell about world, city | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 7 |
| | Drawing Power doesn't tell about the weather | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 |
| | Drawing Power doesn't tell bad things | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| | Drawing Power has cartoons | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| | Drawing Power's funny | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| | Drawing Power's for kids | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| | Drawing Power's pretend | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| | Drawing Power doesn't have reports | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 3 |
| | Drawing Power doesn't have Connie Chung | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| | The news is on later | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| | The news has mystery | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| | (N) | (4) | (4) | (5) | (4) | (17) |

N.B.: Column totals are larger than N's because some children gave more than one answer to this question cartoons still figured as among the most important discriminators in this decision.

Addressing another issue in the first part of the questionnaire, that is, children's perception of producers' intent for prosocial programming, children were asked whose idea they thought it was to put Drawing Power on television for kids. Several children offered more than one answer to this question. Most children, especially the boys, reported that "it's the people who make the program" or "NBC" that wanted Drawing Power on television, indicating some awareness of "producers" of the show (see Table V-9). Fewer children mentioned parents, teachers or other school authorities (e.g., "the Board of Education"), government officials ("Reagan, Lincoln or one of the presidents," "the governor") or others ("news reporters," "Lenny and Pop," "people who like kids" or "kids" themselves) as the people who wanted Drawing Power on television. Except for the sex difference just mentioned for "producers," there were no other sex and age differences in responses to this item.

In one other item in the first part of the questionnaire, the reasons children cited for Drawing Power being on television (their perceptions of producers' intent) corresponded to the answers given in Items 1 and 2 for the kind of program children thought Drawing Power was most like. In this item, children were again almost evenly split in saying Drawing Power was on television either to "teach kids" or "for fun" and "to make kids laugh." There were no age or sex differences here. Only two children mentioned other reasons for Drawing Power being on television. One was to "save parents time teaching kids things" and the other was so that the people who make the show "can make money" (see Table V-10).

## Table V-9

## Children's Understanding of Whose Idea It Is to Put Drawing Power on Television for Children

| Number of Children Who Think the Idea for Drawing Power Came From: | Younger Girls | Younger Boys | Older Girls | Older Boys | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The Producers | 1 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 9 |
| Parents | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 3 |
| Teachers, schools | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| Government | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Other | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 5 |
| (N) | (4) | (4) | (5) | (4) | (17) |

N.B.: Some column totals are larger than N's because some children gave more than one answer to this question.

## Table V-10

## Children's Understanding of the Reason Drawing Power is on Television for Children

| Number of Children Who Think Drawing Power is on Television: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| To teach kids | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 7 |
| For fun | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 6 |
| To save parents time teaching kids | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| To make money for producers | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Missing data | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| (N) | (4) | (4) | (5) | (4) | (17) |

## Learning From and Emotional Responses to Family Shows and Children's Specials-

In the second part of the questionnaire (Part A, Items 9-18), children were asked about their viewing of family shows and children's specials, how they liked these shows, and what they learned from them. First, in an open-ended question, children were asked if they watched any television programs about people's feelings. All the children responding said that, yes, they did watch this type of show (see Table V-11). When asked what kind of programs they watched about people's feelings, only two of the seventeen children said they did not know (both boys). All others had an answer (see Table V-12). Responses broke down into several categories including dramatic family shows (3 girls), sitcom family shows (3 older children), and prosocial shows for children, such as Drawing Power (4 children, no age or sex differences), Fat Albert (3 boys), and Sesame Street (2 younger girls). In an "other" category, three children mentioned the Today Show ("the interviews on it with people"), the Flintstones, and "scary programs" (no sex or age differences).

When asked specifically about family shows such as Brady Bunch or Eight is Enough, fifteen children said they watched these shows and nine children said they watched them "a lot" (see Table V-13).[7] (Older children reported watching family shows more often but there were no sex differences in reported viewing of this type of show.) Children's afterschool and weekend specials were viewed less often by this group, with ten children saying they watched children's specials and three children saying they watched them "a lot" (see Table V-14). (Younger children reported watching children's specials more often, but there were no sex differences.) Children were subsequently questioned about only the type of program, family show or children's special, with which they seemed most

## Table V-11

## Children's Reported Viewing of Television Programs About People's Feelings

| Number of Children Who Reported: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Yes, watch | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 16 |
| No, don't watch | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Missing data | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| (N) | (4) | (4) | (5) | (4) | (17) |

## Table V-12

## The Kinds of Shows Children Reported Watching About People's Feelings

| | Number of Children Who Reported Watching: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| | Dramatic family shows | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 3 |
| | Sitcom family shows | 0 | 0 | 2*** | 1 | 3 |
| PROSOCIAL SHOWS | Drawing Power | 1* | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| | Fat Albert | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 3 |
| | Sesame Street | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| | Other types of shows | 1 | 1** | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| | Don't know | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| | Missing data | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| | (N) | (4) | (4) | (5) | (4) | (17) |

*This child also gave an answer of "dramatic family show."

**This child also answered "Fat Albert."

***Both these children also gave examples of "dramatic family shows."

## Table V-13

## Children's Reported Viewing of Family Shows

| Number of Children Who Reported Watching: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Brady Bunch and/or Eight is Enough | | | | | |
| At all | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 15 |
| Not at all | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Missing data | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| (N) | (4) | (4) | (5) | (4) | (17) |
| A lot | 1 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 9 |
| A little | 2 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 6 |
| (N)* | (3) | (4) | (4) | (4) | (15) |

*N = number of children who watch family shows "at all."

## Table V-14

## Children's Reported Viewing of Children's Specials

| Number of Children Who Reported Watching: | Younger Girls | Younger Boys | Older Girls | Older Boys | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Children's Specials: | | | | | |
| At all | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 10 |
| Not at all | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 4 |
| Missing data | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| (N) | (4) | (4) | (5) | (4) | (17) |
| A lot | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| A little | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 7 |
| (N)* | (2) | (3) | (3) | (2) | (10) |

*N = number of children who watch children's specials "at all."

familiar, based on viewing and liking data (see Tables V-13, 14 and 15). Since in almost all cases this proved to be the family shows rather than children's specials, only results for family programs will be reported.

All but one child who was questioned responded that he/she liked family shows such as Brady Bunch or Eight is Enough (see Table V-15). The reasons given for liking these programs (see Table V-16) were most often the characters ("they're nice," "you get used to them") and the stories ("they're funny," "I like the action," "In the beginning, there's a problem. At the end, the problem's solved and everyone's happy"). Children also reported liking these shows because of the information conveyed in them about families ("they tell about parents and what they're trying to teach kids," "they tell what happens in families ... about fights"). These findings showed no age or sex differences. The one child who said he didn't like family shows reported that the reason was because they were "about sad things, no jokes."

When asked what they learned from family shows, only three children said nothing or that they did not know. Most of the other children (5) reported they learned some kind of moral lesson from the family shows ("don't lie," "not to laugh at people," "sharing, not fighting"). The remaining children (3) said they learned "about feelings," "how to get along and how it will feel when you grow-up," and "how other families live." Again, there were no age or sex differences in reported learning (see Table V-17). Children said this kind of information, and information learned from children's specials, was also learned from parents but not particularly at school or from friends or other sources (see Table V-18).

In other items designed to assess the impact of family shows, children were asked if the interpersonal "problems" often portrayed in family shows ever made them think of problems they may have had at home, at school, or with

## Table V-15

## Children's Reported Liking of Family Shows and Children's Specials

| Number of Children Who Reported Liking: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Family shows | | | | | |
| Yes | 1 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 11 |
| No | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Missing data | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| (N)* | (3) | (4) | (4) | (4) | (15) |
| Children's Specials | | | | | |
| Yes | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| No | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| Missing data | 0 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 6 |
| (N)* | (2) | (3) | (3) | (2) | (10) |

*N = number of children who watch this type of show "at all."

## Table V-16

## Children's Reported Reasons for Liking and Not Liking Family Shows

Reasons Given
for Liking
Family Shows By:

Younger girls: The characters, the stories

(N)* (1)

Younger boys : You get used to the characters
The stories: have a problem at the beginning, solve problem at ending
Don't know

(N) (3)

Older girls : They tell about parents, what parents are trying to teach kids
They're fun, nice characters, educational and funny
They tell what happens in families ... about fights
The characters, stories, they're funny

(N) (4)

Older boys : The stories
The stories
The action

(N) (3)

*N = number of children in each sex-age group who reported liking family shows

Reasons Given
for Not Liking
Family Shows By:

Older boys : They tell sad things, no jokes

(N)** (1)

**N = number of children who reported not liking family shows

## Table V-17

## Children's Reported Learning From Family Shows

Learning Reported
from Family Shows
By:

Younger girls : Nothing
(N)* (1)

Younger boys : How to get along, how it will feel when you grow up
Learn about feelings
Don't know

(N) (3)

Older girls : Not to eavesdrop, don't lie
Sharing not fighting
Should be nice, not laugh at people
Not to blame other people, not fight

(N) (4)

Older boys : How other families live
About stealing
Nothing

(N) (3)

---

[*] N = number of children in each sex-age group who reported learning from Family Shows

## Table V-18

## Children's Reports of Learning Elsewhere Same Content as in Family Shows and Children's Specials

| Number of Children Who Obtain Same Learning From: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Parents | 1 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 5 |
| School | 0 | 1* | 1* | 0 | 2 |
| Friends | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Other: the news | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Only TV | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 4 |
| Missing data | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 7 |
| (N) | (4) | (4) | (5) | (4) | (17) |

*These children also gave "parents" as an answer.

friends. If so, examples were requested. Then children were asked if these programs ever gave them ideas for solving such problems and, again, examples were asked for. In response to the first question (see Table V-19), children reported seven to one that, yes, family shows did make think about their own problems (examples from Table V-20 are: "when my friend's mom married a man with children," "when I want to play outside but there are no kids," "when older girls teased me").

It was impossible to verify that the examples given of television family problems had been actual scenes or stories from episodes of either the Brady Bunch or Eight is Enough. It was also impossible to verify that children actually related these television problems to real incidents in their own lives. But the details given of both the television problems and the personal problems were convincing and seemed to indicate that children had related some of the problems they saw portrayed in family shows to interpersonal problems they had experienced themselves. Children also indicated that programs about families give them ideas for solving problems (see Table V-21). Seven of eight children offered "ideas" such as "keep out of big girls' ways," "they tell you how to make friends," "they teach me how to get over kids not liking me." Those and other examples of "ideas" are included in Table V-22.

In a final group of items designed to look at children's emotional responses to family shows, children were asked if they remembered having any special feelings when they watched such programs or if their feelings in response to these shows were stronger than for other shows. Children were about split, yes and no, on the item asking about special feelings while watching family shows (see Table V-23). Those who answered "yes" said their special feelings were "the same as the people" or "whatever the people were feeling." One child

## Table V-19

### Children's Reporting of Problems Portrayed in Family Shows That Make Them Think About Their Own Problems

| Number of Children Who Said Family Shows Made Them Think of Own Problems: | Younger |  | Older |  | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys |  |
| Yes, made think | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 7 |
| No, didn't make think | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Missing data | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| (N)* | (1) | (3) | (4) | (3) | (11) |

*N = number of children who reported learning from family shows

## Table V-20

### Examples of Children's Own Problems that Problems Portrayed in Family Shows Made Them Think About

| Examples of Own Problems Given By: | | |
|---|---|---|
| Younger girls | : | When older girls teased me |
| (N)[*] | | (1) |
| Younger boys | : | Nobody likes me around here |
| (N) | | (1) |
| Older girls | : | When my friend's mom married a man with children<br>Once at school kids didn't like me<br>If I lose my best friend, I may not be able to help out |
| (N) | | (3) |
| Older boys | : | When friends don't want to talk to you<br>When I want to play outside but there are no kids |
| (N) | | (2) |

[*] N = number of children in each sex-age group who reported family shows make them think of their own problems

## Table V-21

## Children's Reports of Family Shows Giving Them Ideas for Solving Their Own Problems

| Number of Children Who Said Family Shows Gave Them Ideas for Solving Own Problems: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Yes, gave ideas | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 7 |
| No, didn't give ideas | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Missing data | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| (N)* | (1) | (3) | (4) | (3) | (11) |

*N = number of children who reported learning from family shows

## Table V-22

### Examples of Ideas Children Receive From Family Shows for Solving Their Own Problems

| Examples of Ideas for Solving Problems Given By: | | |
|---|---|---|
| Younger girls | : | Keep out of big girls' way--run into your room |
| (N)* | | (1) |
| Younger boys | : | Don't know |
| (N) | | (1) |
| Older girls | : | Taught me not to lie in first grade<br>Teaches me how to get over kids not liking me<br>They tell you how to make friends |
| (N) | | (3) |
| Older boys | : | Tell you how not to get into an argument<br>Tells you what to do when someone takes your Christmas presents |
| (N) | | (2) |

---

*N = number of children in each sex-age group who reported getting ideas from family shows

### Table V-23

### Children's Reports of Special Feelings and Stronger Feelings While Watching Family Shows

| Number of Children Who Reported: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Special Feelings | | | | | |
| Yes | 1 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 5 |
| No | 0 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 5 |
| Missing data | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| (N)* | (1) | (3) | (4) | (3) | (11) |
| Stronger Feelings | | | | | |
| Yes | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| No | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| Missing data | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 6 |
| (N)* | (1) | (3) | (4) | (3) | (11) |

*N = number of children who reported liking family shows said she felt "what it will feel like when I get married" and another said she felt "sad" (see Table V-24). However, most of the very few children who were asked said their feelings were not stronger when watching family shows (see Table V-23). This question, in particular, seemed difficult for most of the children to respond to. One got the impression that affective responses might have been easier to assess if the "stimulus" (a particular episode or scene from the Brady Bunch or Eight is Enough) had been more specifically described or if children had actually viewed it closer to the time in which they were questioned about it.

## Learning From and Emotional Responses to Short Segments in Prosocial Shows-

The third part of the questionnaire (Part B) examined children's learning from and emotional responses to three affective segments from Drawing Power. Since there were no differences, generally, between children's responses to the two animated Drawing Power segments and the McDonald's commercial with live actors, results across all three segments will be discussed. These results are reported for a total of 13 children.[8] The sex and age breakdown for these children was as follows: three older boys, five older girls, two younger boys, and three younger girls.

Answers to items designed to tap learning from the three affective segments indicated that all children accurately recalled the messages conveyed in the segments (see Table V-25). All but three children (two younger girls and one older boy) correctly identified the segments as prosocial and not just for fun, and all of the children used the message in the segment to make this decision (see Table V-26). Ten children reported that they would think again about the segment they saw (two older children said maybe, one younger girl said no)

## Table V-24

## Kinds of Special Feelings Children Reported Feeling While Watching Family Shows

Kinds of Special
Feelings Reported By:

Younger girls : Same as character
(N)* (1)

Younger boys : Whatever the people feel
(N) (1)

Older girls : What it will feel like when I get married
Sad
Don't know
(N) (3)

Older boys :
(N) (0)

---

[*] N = number of children in each sex-age group who reported having special feelings while watching family shows

## Table V-25

## Children's Recall of Messages From Short, Affective Segments

| Number of Children Who Recalled Messages From: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Superperson U | | | | | |
| Yes | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| No | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Turkey of the Week | | | | | |
| Yes | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 4 |
| No | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| McDonald's Commercial | | | | | |
| Yes | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 6 |
| No | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| (N) | (3) | (2) | (5) | (3) | (13) |

## Table V-26

## Children's Classifications of Short, Affective Segments as Prosocial or For Fun

| Number of Children Classifying Segment as Prosocial: | Younger |  | Older |  | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys |  |
| Superperson U |  |  |  |  |  |
| Yes | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| No | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Turkey of the Week |  |  |  |  |  |
| Yes | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 3 |
| No | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| McDonald's commercial |  |  |  |  |  |
| Yes | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| No | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| (N) | (3) | (2) | (5) | (3) | (13) |

| In Making Distinction, Number of Children Using Messages as Cues: | Younger |  | Older |  | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys |  |
| Superperson U |  |  |  |  |  |
| Yes | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| No | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Turkey of the Week |  |  |  |  |  |
| Yes | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 4 |
| No | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| McDonald's commercial |  |  |  |  |  |
| Yes | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 6 |
| No | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| (N) | (3) | (2) | (5) | (3) | (13) |

(see Table V-27). Ten said that this thinking would occur "when the same thing happens to me" or "when the same thing happens to someone else" (see Table V-28). Most of these children said the reason they would think about the segments at some future time was because bad consequences would follow if they did not (three older girls) or so they would know what to do (one younger girl, one younger boy, and one older girl). Only two children (older boys) mentioned they would remember the segments because of their emotional responses to them ("it was funny" and "some sad things you never forget") (see Table V-29).

In discussing emotional responses to the segments, children easily reported a global response of liking or not liking (see Table V-30). All but one child said they liked the segments. Children were also able, except for one younger boy, to discuss at length and quite articulately their emotional responses to the characters and the reasons for these responses (see Table V-31). One set of emotional responses to characters was again global indications of liking or not liking. The reasons given for disliking or liking the characters (Dirty Harry in Turkey of the Week, Spike and the little boy he "victimized" in Superperson U, and Jim in McDonald's commercial) generally had to do with character traits, what one character did to another, or what happened to a character. Some children also mentioned that their agreement with the message in the segment was the reason they disliked the character ("it's not good to be dirty" or "it's not good to be mean").

Other emotional responses to characters generally were of two types. Children either recognized (and felt?) the feeling expressed by the character or they empathized with the character's expressed feelings and reported feeling sorry for the character. (It should be noted that this was probably the intent of the particular segments watched.) Reasons given for these responses were

## Table V-27

## Children's Reported Intentions to Recall Short Affective Segments in Future

| Number of Children Reporting They Will Think About Segment Again: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Superperson U | | | | | |
| Yes | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| No | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Maybe | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Turkey of the Week | | | | | |
| Yes | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 4 |
| No | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Maybe | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| McDonald's commercial | | | | | |
| Yes | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 5 |
| No | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Maybe | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| (N) | (3) | (2) | (5) | (3) | (13) |

## Table V-28

### Children's Answers to When in Future They Will Apply Messages in Segments

| | |
|---|---|
| Superperson U: | |
| Older girls: | When same thing happens to me |
| | When same thing happens to someone else |
| (N) | (2) |
| Older boys: | When same thing happens to me |
| (N) | (1) |
| Turkey of the Week: | |
| Younger girls: | When same thing happens to me |
| (N) | (1) |
| Younger boys: | Don't know |
| (N) | (1) |
| Older girls: | When same thing happens to me |
| | When same thing happens to me |
| (N) | (2) |
| McDonald's Commercial: | |
| Younger girls: | When same thing happens to me |
| (N) | (1) |
| Younger boys: | When same thing happens to me |
| (N) | (1) |
| Older girls: | When same thing happens to me |
| (N) | (1) |
| Older boys: | Tomorrow when same thing happens to me |
| (N) | (2) |

## Table V-29

## Children's Reasons for Applying Messages in Segments Sometime in the Future

| | |
|---|---|
| Superperson U: | |
| Older girls; | Bad consequences will follow if don't |
| | Bad consequences will follow if don't |
| (N) | (2) |
| Older boys: | It was funny |
| (N) | (1) |
| Turkey of the Week: | |
| Younger girls: | So know what to do |
| (N) | (1) |
| Younger boys: | So know what to do |
| (N) | (1) |
| Older girls: | Bad consequences will follow if don't |
| | Don't know |
| (N) | (2) |
| McDonald's Commercial: | |
| Younger girls: | Missing data |
| Younger boys: | Missing data |
| Older girls: | So know what to do |
| (N) | (1) |
| Older boys: | Some sad things you don't forget |
| | Dont' know |
| (N) | (2) |

## Table V-30

## Children's Reported Liking of Short, Affective Segments

| Number of Children Who Reported Liking: | Younger | | Older | | All Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | |
| Superperson U | | | | | |
| Yes | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| No | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Turkey of the Week | | | | | |
| Yes | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 4 |
| No | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| McDonald's Commercial | | | | | |
| Yes | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 6 |
| No | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| (N) | (3) | (2) | (5) | (3) | (13) |

## Table V-31

## Children's Emotional Responses to the Characters In the Short Affective Segments and Their Stated Reasons for These Responses

| Segment | Emotional Responses | Reasons for Emotional Responses |
|---|---|---|
| Superperson U | Didn't like one character empathized with one character, recognized feelings one character portrayed | One character disagreeable, imagined feelings of one character, agreed with message in segment |
| | Empathized with one character | One character disagreeable, felt sorry for one character, segment was funny |
| | Didn't like one character, empathized with one character | One character disagreeable, imagined feelings of one character |
| (N) | (3) | (3) |
| Turkey of the Week | Didn't like character, then liked character, empathized with character | Agreed with message in segment, felt sorry for character |
| | Didn't like character | Agreed with message in segment, character disagreeable |
| | Didn't like character, then liked character, recognized feelings character portrayed | Character disagreeable, character changed behavior |
| (N) | (3) | (3) |
| McDonald's commercial | Empathized with character | Same thing happened to me |
| | Empathized with character | Imagined feelings portrayed by character |
| | Empathized with character | Felt sorry for character, imagined feelings portrayed by character |
| | Empathized with character | Imagined feelings portrayed by character |
| | Empathized with character | Agreed with message, imagined feelings portrayed by character |
| | Empathized with character | Felt sorry for character |
| (N) | (6) | (6) |

similar. Children reported that they felt the way they did about the characters because they imagined how the character felt or because the same thing (and the same feeling) had happened to them before. There were no sex or age differences in reported feelings about characters in the segments.

Besides the feelings of liking or disliking the segment as a whole and the feelings about the characters, children were able to report few other feelings about the segments (see Table V-32). Exceptions were one child who reported feeling "really involved with it" (an older girl), another who said the segment (not particularly the character) made her "remember the same feeling" she had once had (a younger girl). However, given the very short length of the segments, it was impressive that the children, including even the youngest ones, could talk as ably and extensively as they did about their emotional responses to these segments.

## Conclusions

Although there are several limitations to the generalizability of the findings from this pilot study, the results do raise some important issues regarding the programming of prosocial material for children on television. First, as was mentioned earlier, findings from the first part of the questionnaire indicate that children had little trouble classifying Drawing Power as one type of programming or another. They also had little trouble distinguishing Drawing Power as the same as or different from other types of programming. Children could even articulate the program cues they used to make these discriminations. But almost half of the sample classified Drawing Power as a program that was just for fun, seemingly missing the prosocial intent of the show. About half the sample also thought the "producers" of Drawing Power wanted the

## Table V-32

## Children's Other (Non-Character Mediated) Emotional Responses to Short, Affective Segments

| Segment | Emotional Response |
|---|---|
| Superperson U | I felt really involved with it |
| Turkey of the Week | It was funny |
| McDonald's Commercial | It made me remember same feeling |

program on television exclusively "for fun" or "to make kids laugh." Again, these responses suggested the producers' prosocial intent for the show had been missed. Looking at the reasons given by children for their prosocial/for fun decisions, it appears that the cartoons and humor or jokes in Drawing Power figured heavily into the just-for-fun classifications, especially among younger viewers. In other words, the funny parts of Drawing Power and the cartoons in the program contributed to children's perceptions of Drawing Power as a program that was just for fun rather than a program that tried to teach something important.

The question remains whether an "erroneous" belief that a prosocial program is just-for-fun adversely affects children's learning from it. If it does not, one could argue so much the better, who can argue with sugar-coated prosocial messages. But clearly that is an issue that has not been resolved. It deserves more attention if the efforts of prosocial television programmers to educate and entertain, especially younger children, are not to be squandered. One way to shed further light on this issue would be to look at children's learning from prosocial programs when they have "inaccurately" classified these shows as programs that are just for fun.

Another set of important educational issues was raised by findings from the second part of the questionnaire. These center on the seeming popularity and importance with children of television programs using a "family format." For those interested in children's learning of affective content via television, the family show appears, for several reasons, to be a promising vehicle for more deliberate programming in this area. First, many of the children in this sample spontaneously offered examples of family sitcoms and dramatic family series as television programs they watch that are about people's feelings.

Children also reported watching family shows a lot and, almost without exception, liked these shows. Reported learning from family shows included not only moral lessons but ideas about feelings, families, and being adults. Family shows also made children think about their own interfamilial or interpersonal "problems" and gave children ideas for solving such problems. These were ideas that children reported not especially learning at school or with friends but mostly at home, if anywhere other than on television. Children also reported experiencing special feelings while watching family shows, mostly empathic responses to characters or identification with feelings portrayed by characters. It is likely that these feelings had some influence on what children learned from family shows.

Although the content learned in family shows can be described only broadly as "affective," it is clear that children are learning something from these shows that impacts on their understanding of families and interpersonal relationships. How crucial this learning is to children's emotional development in general is another area worthy of further research and greater attention in television programming for children.

Because not enough children in this sample reported seeing children's specials very frequently, the conclusions offered about family shows cannot be extended to this second type of programming for children. Though this result was unfortunate, it was not surprising since many children's specials are on in the afterschool hours during weekdays, and the children in this sample are in afterschool programs away from their homes and televisions during these hours. However, one might reason that children's dramatic specials could provide another means of teaching content similar to that conveyed in family programs. It would be interesting to test this assertion with another sample of children.

From the last part of the questionnaire, it seems that short, affective segments in prosocial shows are another effective format for televised teaching of affective content to children. Children accurately recalled the messages in these segments, recognized their intent as prosocial, and planned to apply the learned messages in the future when the same set of circumstances happened to them. The messages in these segments would be guides to their behavior at those times, they said.

Emotional responses to short, affective segments also centered on the characters in the segments, although global ratings of liking were not entirely dependent on the characters. Again the question of character-mediated affects and their impact on learning from televised segments was raised by these findings. If the relationship between emotional responses and learning were more firmly established, children's emotional responses to televised segments might be better utilized for more effective learning from this medium of affective or other content.

Two additional conclusions are suggested by the findings from this study, particularly the findings from the second and third parts of the questionnaire. As previously stated, it was impressive that children could talk as ably and extensively about their learning from television and especially their feelings in response to programming dealing with emotions. This was true for both the short, affective segments that dealt with a specific and well-focused concept about feelings and the family shows that dealt with broad family or interpersonal affective issues. These findings are encouraging in two respects. First, they suggest that television may be very important in future research on children's emotional development, for it provides rich "stimulus" material that evokes emotional responses in children. These responses can be studied with specific theoretical issues in mind. Second, the findings from this study also suggest that certain television content may well impact children's emotional development. The medium could probably be used more deliberately to enhance children's experiences with emotion and their general emotional development. Family dramas and situation comedies offer clear vehicles for doing this.

## VI. IMPLICATIONS FOR PROSOCIAL PROGRAMMING

Long ago, at the beginning of this voluminous report, it was noted that the networks infrequently produce prosocial programming for Saturday morning broadcasting. It is even rarer for them to assess the accomplishments of such programming.[9] The three evaluations reported here thus stand as an unusual opportunity to examine prosocial programming as it is produced by the networks and viewed by American children.

All three evaluations -- for Drawing Power, the Play Alongs, and How To Watch TV -- indicated that such programming can succeed in its prosocial goals. Children learned about television, careers, books, nutrition, exercise, crafts, drawing techniques, pet care, social norms, and the like. They were reminded about how to be considerate of others and get along well with them. They became actively engaged in mental and physical activities portrayed on the television screen. They gained ideas for future activities and intentions to be more considerate in their interactions with others. All these outcomes are exactly what one would want from prosocial programming, and all are positive contributions to children's lives.

Although the evaluations were not designed to determine what program characteristics help content to have greater impact, some inferences can be made. One is that programming which is highly visual and explicit in its presentation of an idea is more likely to have an impact. This was true for the Animals Don't Die How to Watch TV drop-in, the Superperson University segment in Drawing Power, and the Scrambled Faces Play Along. Each was highly explicit and visual in presenting its information and/or encouraging children to participate in its activity. A second contributing characteristic is repetition, especially with variation. The best recalled segment from

Drawing Power was Superperson University in which the same ideas is presented in several scenes. A third contributing characteristic, at least for programming about interpersonal relations, is focussing on behaviors which are widely endorsed in society. These were the most likely to be accepted by children who viewed Drawing Power. A fourth, at least for programming designed to promote active participation, is to keep the pace slow enough that children can actually perform the suggested activity along with the programming suggesting it. Such was the pace of the Scrambled Faces Play Along.

Including these characteristics in future prosocial programming could lead to an increase in its impact on children. However, successful programming does not often come from simple-minded application of a formula or a few guidelines. Using characteristics which have generally been successful in the past, mixing them in ways which are appropriate for the particular goals and content of the programming, adding lots of creativity, and probably having some luck are all factors influencing the success of prosocial programming. Given the best possible circumstances, prosocial programming's impact should be high, but it still cannot be expected to impact or convert all child viewers. No programming does.

Certainly, none of the programming evaluated here had an overwhelming effect on children. It did not make an angel out of a little beast. It did not make even the majority of the child viewers guess words or riddles or perform exercises or do dances each time a Play Along encouraged such activity. It did not succeed in teaching them all the facts that were presented about careers, books, or the nature of television. To note these limitations in impact is not to condemn present prosocial programming as failures. What reasonable person would want children's personalities changed from four half-hours of programming? Or want them all to get busy and participate each time the television suggested they should? Or want them all to learn facts that are presented once in a thirty-second swipe at an idea?

At the same time, assessing the impacts of prosocial programming raises the dilemma of how to decide when it has achieved enough impact to be deemed a success. Is it enough to affect any children? Or must it affect at least half of them? Or must any child be affected a third of the time s/he watches such programming? There are no generally agreed upon standards for how much effect signifies success for prosocial programming. Standards lie somewhere between no effect and 100% effect, and probably toward the upper rather than lower end. Yet no one would hold as a reasonable standard that all children be affected all the time. In the absence of an accepted norm for successful performance by prosocial programming and with results which show that programming did not impact all children or impact them completely, the best that can be said is that NBC's prosocial programming -- Drawing Power, Play Alongs, and How to Watch TV -- made some difference in children's lives. Depending on one's standards, the difference was or was not large enough to say the programming was successful.

Turning from the effects of prosocial programming to its appeal for children, one encounters no such problems with missing standards. The standards are very clear. Successful prosocial programming must be attractive enough to command a reasonable share of the audience when it is broadcast as an entire program and attractive enough at least to retain the audience when it is broadcast as drop-ins to other programming. Some people would argue against these norms or assert that they should not be given precedence over network responsibilities to broadcast prosocial programming, but, in fact, these standards are firmly entrenched in the industry.

Accepting the standards for the moment, the success of NBC's prosocial programming must be viewed as at best mixed.[10] Drawing Power, although judged appealing by children, did not hold up well when they were asked whether they would watch it or another Saturday morning program broadcast at the same time. It did better when its competition was other prosocial programming than when it was other NBC (non-prosocial) programming, but it did not do all that well in either comparison.

Drawing Power's ratings seem to confirm this finding, although such ratings are determined by audience flow, competition, and available audience, as well as by the program itself. In Drawing Power's case, all three scheduling factors probably operated against it. The series, as tested in this evaluation, appealed more to younger than older children, yet it was broadcast when the audience was more heavily composed of older children, adolescents, and adults. Also, it preceded Jonny Quest, a series which appeals most strongly to older boys, the very group that liked Drawing Power least. Finally, it ran against programming which appealed to more of the older children who are a larger proportion of the late morning audience. These circumstances, as well as the appeal of Drawing Power itself, must certainly have contributed to its lower rating.

Compared to Drawing Power, the Play Alongs were more successful in meeting the appeal criterion which applied to them. That is, they were attractive enough at least to retain the audience for the Flintstones Comedy Show into which they were placed. As a type of programming, however, they were not overwhelmingly successful. Children rated their appeal as less than that of the Flintstones cartoons and were less likely to resume viewing (after having stopped) while they were on than when the cartoons were on.

Thus, the Play Alongs may be judged to have met only a minimum criterion of success. The judgment that the Play Alongs performed better than Drawing Power must, of course, be tempered by the recognition that they had an easier task. To be judged successful, they only needed to keep the audience which the Flintstones cartoons delivered to them. Drawing Power, on the other hand, had to attract and keep an audience on its own merits.

The crucial question for programming is, of course, how to make prosocial programming attractive on its own. Inserts like the Play Alongs are certainly a good prosocial addition to Saturday morning, but one would want even drop-ins like that to help attract an audience -- not just not to lose it. Moreover, it is certainly not too much to want to be able to produce an attractive prosocial series. Can these be done?

The present evaluation was not designed to determine the characteristics which would make prosocial programming more attractive to children. However, some inferences can be drawn from the findings. One is that drop-ins to well-established programs are less likely to cause lower ratings than a new series might. A second is that, where something other than drop-ins is wanted, longer stories with plotted dramatic storylines are probably better in generating appeal. The high appeal of the Superperson University segments in Drawing Power and the continued success of Fat Albert both support this inference, although most children in this evaluation did not say they preferred longer plotted stories when directly questioned. A third inference is that drop-ins designed to encourage participation are more likely to regain a lost audience and less likely to lose an audience when they are quite explicit in inviting children to join in. For instance, the Faces, Words, and Dance Play Alongs are all quite explicit in telling children how they can participate, and they lost fewer child viewers than did the Flintstones cartoons. Also, Faces and Words regained more audience than did the cartoons, and Faces received a higher appeal rating than the cartoons. Here, then, are examples of prosocial drop-ins which are even more attractive than the regular cartoons with which they appear.

It was noted in discussing the characteristics of prosocial programming which should impact children more that there are no formulas which guarantee success. The same is true for creating appealing programming in general. To make recommendations about how to increase appeal is not to suggest that following them guarantees highly attractive prosocial programming. Nor is it to suggest that recommended choices are the only ones that would characterize attractive prosocial programming. The recommendations are simply the only ones which can be inferred from the data gathered in the present evaluations.

Appeal is virtually the sine qua non of network programming. It is also something of a never ending mystery for programmers. Series they believe will be successful fail. Series they have doubts about succeed. Programmers have beliefs about what will do well and what will not. They are very often right. They are also surprised more often than they would like -- or than is probably good for their job security. Since these circumstances prevail for primetime and Saturday morning programming, it is not surprising they also prevail for prosocial programming. Nor is it surprising that there are few examples of especially appealing prosocial programming. Relatively few prosocial programs have been attempted. If their rates of success and failure are similar to those for other programming, there would be few examples of successful prosocial programming simply because there has been little of it. Stating this is not meant as counter argument to the widely shared belief that it is hard to do attractive prosocial programming, only to put it in perspective.

Since the networks will continue to have some inclination and obligation to produce prosocial programming, it is in their own interest to explore further what characterizes successful prosocial programming. This may occur through both the creative process and research. As more prosocial programming is created, there will be more different types available. From among the greater number will certainly arise one or more models of successful prosocial programming. As data from the pilot study reported here indicated, some primetime programming could perhaps already serve as models. Such family dramas as Little House on the Prairie, Family, and The Waltons and such situation comedies as Eight is Enough, The Brady Bunch, and Mork and Mindy are examples of successful prosocial programming. Whether the sources of their appeal and impact are well enough understood that they can serve as models and whether they are viable for Saturday morning are still unknown.

Research may also provide some guidance about appropriate models for prosocial programming. It could, for instance, help identify issues, characteristics, themes, and the like that the general public associates with the concept of "prosocial television programming." Certainly there is not now any generally agreed upon conceptual or operational definition of the term. To have one derived from the public would facilitate network consideration of when it has produced successful prosocial programming.

The present evaluation indicates that children's normal viewing behavior may be studied, as it indicates the appeal and impact of prosocial programming. With the assistance of parents and other responsible family members one can gather information on what children actually do at home vis-a-vis Saturday morning programming. Here is the opportunity to "see" children watch, become bored, change channels, turn off the set, laugh, be afraid, participate, comment, look interested and in every other usual way indicate how much they like, dislike, and otherwise respond to regular television programming. Here is the opportunity to see what program content actually triggers these reactions. No more ecologically valid research methods could be found. Certainly the evaluation indicates that the home observation, questionnaire, and interview are research methods worth using again.

It is to be hoped that new programming efforts and additional research will help provide models for successful prosocial programming. The present evaluations indicate that current prosocial programming can influence children in desirable ways and that some of it can be sufficiently attractive to "make it" on Saturday morning. Now the goals should be to increase the impact of such programming and to find ways to make it more appealing. Children can benefit from including prosocial programming in their Saturday morning viewing schedule and they can enjoy it. Why not find ways to do more?

# REFERENCES

Children's Television Task Force, Federal Communications Commission. *Television programming for children*. Unpublished report, Washington, D.C., October 1979.

Eastman, H. A., & Liss, M. B. TV preferences of children from four parts of the U.S. *Journalism Quarterly*, 1980, *57*, 488-491.

Lesser, G. S. *Children and television: Lessons from Sesame Street*. New York: Random House, 1974.

Palmer, E. L., & Dorr, A. (Eds.). *Children and the faces of television -- teaching, violence, selling*. New York: Academic Press, 1980.

Steiner, G. A. *The people look at television: A study of audience attitudes*. New York: Knopf, 1963.

Williams, F., LaRose, R., Smith, K., Frost, F., & Eastman, H. *Project Freestyle: National evaluation results*. Unpublished manuscript, Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Southern California, 1977.

## FOOTNOTES

[1] Issues addressed in the three evaluations were determined in discussions among the researchers (Aimée Dorr, Catherine Doubleday, Peter Kovaric, and Dale Kunkel) and NBC staff and a consultant (Mickey Dwyer, Sam Ewing, Ronald Milavsky, Barbara Mills, Horst Stipp, and Phyllis Tucker Vinson). Some additional coding and analyses were decided upon following a report of preliminary findings to NBC staff, one consultant, and members of NBC's Social Science Advisory Panel.

[2] The original plan was to split children into groups of younger and older participants, with the groups being ages 6-8 and 9-11. Because the afterschool programs in which the research was conducted were more heavily attended by younger than older children, the age split of 5-7 and 8-12 had to be used instead. Since afterschool care programs were virtually the only reasonable source of participants, the other alternatives to the 5-7 and 8-12 split were to have very unequal numbers of children in 6-8 and 9-11 age groups or to conduct the research in many more than the five afterschool programs utilized. Both these alternatives seemed less desirable than the 5-7 and 8-12 age split which was chosen.

[3] One participating afterschool care program insisted that children spend no more than two non-consecutive days per week viewing television as part of the program's activities. For this reason, viewing and testing were scheduled over two weeks beginning at the end of one week and ending the middle of the next week.

[4] Directors of all afterschool programs agreed to let all children view the television programs, even if they did not have permission to participate in the research. The directors believed the prosocial content of the programming was worthwhile for all children and a reasonable part of the activities of the afterschool care centers. Several children who did not have permission to be tested at the early viewing sessions brought completed consent forms later in the week.

[5] Children who said they remembered seeing the Symphony Play Along were not asked to describe its content. It was assumed they would be unable to describe the music (the main point of the Play Along) in any detail that mattered.

[6] At the request of NBC, those recruited in the latter part of the Play Alongs evaluation were asked how often the children they observed watched the Flintstones Comedy Show on KNBC on Saturday mornigs and also how often they watched the syndicated Flintstones broadcast weekdays on a local independent station. The correlation in viewing frequency, with frequency measured on a four-point scale, was only .22, N = 50.

[7] Brady Bunch and Eight is Enough were selected because of some earlier unpublished research by Dorr and Kovaric in which these programs were shown to be frequently watched by children of this age group.

[8] Data for all seventeen children could not be obtained for this part of the questionnaire due to technical difficulties with the videocassette recorder at one afterschool center for this part of the research only.

[9] To our knowledge the only other network-sponsored evaluations of prosocial programming, other than small in-house assessments, have been those for Hot Hero Sandwich, Fat Albert and the Cosby Kids, Harlem Globetrotters Popcorn Machine, U.S. of Archie, Shazam, and Isis.

[10] The appeal of How to Watch TV drop-ins was not measured, because NBC felt the more important issue was children's learning from them.

# Appendix A

## Participant Recruitment for Drawing Power and How to Watch TV

- Letter of Introduction to Parents
- Consent Form for Participation
- Project Description

THE ANNENBERG SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATIONS
at the University of Southern California
University Park
Los Angeles, California 90007

Dear Parents:

I am writing to ask permission for your child to participate in a research project which will be carried out at his or her afterschool program. The administrator of the afterschool program has agreed to the project, but we need your permission too.

The research is being conducted for NBC. It will provide them with information on children's opinions about and responses to some of their programs. All the programs are educational in that they show socially-valued ideas and behaviors. NBC will use our results to improve these programs. We may also publish our results in professional journals.

If your child participates in the project, this is what will happen. He or she will be able to watch up to five half-hour programs over one week in the afterschool program. We will interview him or her about this type of educational program, show him or her one new half-hour episode of the type already viewed, and interview him or her about the program. The total amount of educational programming viewed would be no more than three hours. The total interviewing time would be 30-45 minutes. The work will be conducted by me and graduate student research assistants. The afterschool program will receive a monetary gift as a thank you.

In our experience children enjoy this kind of project and usually learn something from it. There are no known bad effects. If, however, a child should find he or she did not want to finish the project, we would certainly agree to that. We keep all information from individuals anonymous and confidential.

We think this project is worthwhile. It should be informative and fun for the children, and it will help NBC to improve its children's programming. If you should want to know more about it, please feel free to read the detailed description on file in the office of the administrator of the afterschool program or to call me or the research assistants.

If you are willing to have your child participate, please fill out and sign the enclosed permission slip. Have your child return it to the afterschool program tomorrow. Thank you.

Aimee Dorr

Aimee Dorr, Ph.D.
Project Director
743-2255

Cathy Doubleday, Peter Kovaric, Dale Kunkel
Graduate Student Research Assistants
743-7406, ext. 36

This is to certify that I ____________________ give my permission for my child ____________________ to participate in the research project "Evaluation of Prosocial Television Programming for Children -- At School Viewing Project." The research in under the supervision of Dr. Aimee Dorr, a faculty member at the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Southern California. The research project has been fully explained to me, and I understand that it will involve the following special procedures:

* My child may choose to watch some children's programs when he or she is participating in the afterschool program.

* The programs are designed to teach facts and encourage good behavior. They contain commercials and all other non-program material that are usually broadcast on television.

* My child will be interviewed about this type of program, shown another episode of the same series, and then interviewed about that program.

* There are no known bad effects of this research on children. My child will probably enjoy it and learn something.

* My child may withdraw from the project at any time.

* All questions I have will be answered by Dr. Dorr or her research assistants.

* All information from each child will be kept confidential and anonymous.

* The information from the project will be used by NBC to improve its programming for children and may be used by the researchers for scientific reports.

* My child's afterschool program will receive a monetary gift as a thank you.

| | |
|---|---|
| ____________________<br>Child's age | ____________________<br>Parent's signature |
| ____________________<br>Telephone number | ____________________<br>Date |

THE ANNENBERG SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATIONS
at the University of Southern California
University Park,
Los Angeles, California 90007

Project Description
Evaluation of Prosocial Television Programming
for Children
At School Viewing Project
January 1981

We are teachers and researchers at the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Southern California. We are interested in evaluating some children's television programming now being broadcast on Saturday mornings by NBC. Children who participate will be asked what they like and do not like about the programming, what information or ideas they gain from it, and whom they think programming is good for. The results of our study will be used by NBC in the development of improved children's programming for next year. They may also be published by us in professional journals.

The research will be carried out at several locations such as this one where children attend afterschool programs. Data for the project will be gathered in the following way. During one week in January or February (1981), children will be given the choice of watching several children's television programs while they are participating in their regular afterschool program. All of these television programs are educational in that they attempt to teach children socially-valued ideas or behaviors. They are all television programs that have been recently broadcast by various stations in Los Angeles and will contain commercials and all other non-program material usually seen when programs are viewed at home.

A few days after the program tapes have been brought to the center, children will be interviewed about the type of television programming they have been given the opportunity to watch. The interviewing will be done during the afterschool program. Then children will be asked to watch another television program and will be interviewed about that program.

As far as we know, participating in this research project should be fun for children. Almost every child we have ever worked with has enjoyed sharing opinions about television, and children usually learn something about themselves when they do.

In order to make sure this is a pleasant experience for the children, we will do the following things: 1) only work with children with parental permission to do so, 2) only work with a child if he or she agrees to do so, 3) tell each child that he or she can stop participating at any time, 4) tell each child how his or her answers will help us, 5) answer any questions parents, children, or staff may have about what we are doing, and 6) only work with children at times the administrator of the afterschool program chooses as appropriate.

In all of the work we do we will only be talking about children as a group. We will never identify individual children. Moreover, all of our records will be kept in such a way that no one will know what any particular child has said or written. This is to insure the children's privacy and because we are concerned only with what children as a group say.

At the conclusion of the project, a monetary gift will be given to the afterschool program as a small thank you. If anyone wants to talk about the project with us at any time, he or she may call one of us at the numbers listed below. Thank you very much for your help

Aimee Dorr

Peter Kovaric, Dale Kunkel, or Cathy Doubleday
Graduate Student Research Assistants , 743-7406, ext. 36

# Appendix B

## Segments Comprising Drawing Power, How to Watch TV, and Fat Albert Tapes

## Appendix B

### Segments Comprising Drawing Power and Fat Albert Episodes Shown in Afterschool Care Programs

| Segments and Episode | Segment | Content |
|---|---|---|
| Drawing Power$_1$ | Super U | Supershoes |
| | Wacky | Hippo heart attack |
| | Turkey | Dirty Harry |
| | Rutabaga | Peas |
| | Book | Secret Garden |
| | Pet Peeves | Chick grows up |
| | How to Watch TV | Good to have different people on TV |
| Drawing Power$_2$ | Super U | Instant replay |
| | Wacky | Big fish for queen |
| | Turkey | Willy Tell |
| | Wacky | Wall of China |
| | Rutabaga | Food without salt |
| | What do | Dairy farm |
| | How to Watch TV | Why ads on TV |
| Drawing Power$_3$ | Super U | Superpop |
| | Rutabaga | Fiber |
| | What do | Orthopedist |
| | Book | Tom Sawyer |
| | Wacky | Canary sings |
| | Pet Peeves | Bird care |
| | How to Watch TV | Animals don't die |
| Drawing Power$_4$ | Super U | Law and Order |
| | Wacky | Ape painting |
| | Rutabaga | Celery |
| | Book | Gulliver's Travels |
| | Wacky | Bulldozer and car |
| | What do | Meteorologist |
| | How to Watch TV | Plan time for TV and homework |
| Fat Albert | Bill and Russell get their tonsils out | |

# Appendix C

## Researcher's Text and Child's Response Sheet for Day 4 Questionnaire About Drawing Power and How to Watch TV

My name is ____________________ . I'm from the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Southern California. I'm here today to ask you some questions about one of the TV programs we asked you to watch, "Drawing Power." Myself and the rest of our group are trying to find out how children feel about this program, and the only way we can do that is to talk to children like you. What you have to say is very important to us, so think carefully about your answers before marking them down. Also, remember that there are no right or wrong answers. Everything I'll ask you allows you to tell us your opinion, or just what you think about something. We're only interested in what you think, so please don't talk with your neighbor or show your answer to him or her.

OK, ready to begin? I'm going to hand out a response sheet for each of you. Then I'm going to ask you some questions and have you mark your answers on your response sheet. To make sure that we can understand your answers, it's important that we all stay together and follow my instructions. Only mark an answer on your response sheet when I ask you to, and remember to think carefully about your answer before marking it down. If you're not sure where to mark your answers, or have any other questions, raise your hand and I'll stop and help you.

(PASS OUT RESPONSE SHEET) In the upper right hand corner is a place for you to write down your name, and how old you are. Also, circle whether you are a boy or a girl. Fill in this part and then we'll begin.

Remember, were talking about the program "Drawing Power." Does everyone know what that program is?

(BE SURE FOR EACH CHILD)

1. About how many times have you seen "Drawing Power" at home, and how many times have you seen it at ____________ on the videotapes we brought you? On your response sheet, write down the number of times you have watched it, first only at home, after the word "home." Then write down the number of times you have seen "Drawing Power" on the videotapes we asked you to watch. Write down this answer after the word "project."

2. How much do you like the program "Drawing Power?" A lot, some, a little, or not at all? On your response sheet, circle the choice which tells us how much you like "Drawing Power."

   I'm interested in what you do and don't like about the program. I'm going to read some things which tell what the program "Drawing Power" is like. For each one, we want you to tell us whether you like or don't like it. While I read each one aloud, you follow along on your response sheet, checking the box marked "like" if you like it, and the box "don't like" if you don't. If you're not sure whether you do or don't like something, check the box in the middle marked "not sure." OK?

3. "Drawing Power" has a lot of short stories instead of one long one.

4. Some of the stories are cartoons.

5. It tries to teach you things.

6. It has real people on the show, not just cartoons.

7. The real people in the program make jokes with each other.

8. The real people in the program tell what the cartoon stories are about.

9. Both the people in the program and the cartoons talk about the same things or ideas.

10. Each story or cartoon in "Drawing Power" usually has an idea or a point it tries to tell you. Is it usually easy or hard for you to understand the ideas the program tries to tell you? Check the box on your response sheet which tells us how you feel, whether the ideas are "easy" or "hard" to understand.

11. I'm going to read you some pairs of television shows. I want you to imagine that both of the shows are on at the same time, and check the box of the show that you would rather watch, if you could only watch one of them.

    a. If you could watch Drawing Power, or Fat Albert, which would you rather watch?

    b. If you could watch Drawing Power, or Big Blue Marble, which would you rather watch?

    c. If you could watch Drawing Power, or Flintstones, which would you rather watch?

    d. If you could watch Drawing Power, or Daffy Duck, which would you rather watch?

    e. If you could watch Drawing Power, or Jonny Quest, which would you rather watch?

12. Who do you think would like to watch "Drawing Power?" There are three groups of people I want to ask you about, children older than yourself, children your age, and children younger than yourself. For each group, I want you to indicate on your response sheet either "YES," I think they would like to watch "Drawing Power," or "NO," I don't think they would like to watch it. For each group, mark either one yes or one no.

13. Do you remember seeing anything on any Saturday morning programs you've watched or on any of the programs we asked you to watch, which tells you about how to watch television? Mark YES if you've seen anything like this, and NO if you haven't.

NAME ______________________________

AGE ____________________ BOY/GIRL

DATE ______________ INT. ____________

SESSION ____________ ETH. ____________

1. HOME ______________________ PROJECT ________________________

2. A LOT ☺ SOME 🙂 A LITTLE 😐 NOT AT ALL ☹

3. ☺ LIKE 😐 NOT SURE ☹ DON'T LIKE

4. ☺ LIKE 😐 NOT SURE ☹ DON'T LIKE

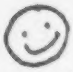
5. ☺ LIKE 😐 NOT SURE ☹ DON'T LIKE

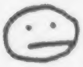
6. ☺ LIKE 😐 NOT SURE ☹ DON'T LIKE

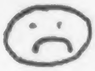
7. ☺ LIKE 😐 NOT SURE ☹ DON'T LIKE

8. ☺ LIKE 😐 NOT SURE ☹ DON'T LIKE

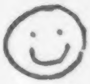
9.

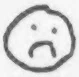

LIKE


NOT SURE


DON'T LIKE

10.


EASY


HARD

11.

a. "DRAWING POWER" "FAT ALBERT"

b. "DRAWING POWER" "BIG BLUE MARBLE"

c. "DRAWING POWER" "FLINTSTONES"

d. "DRAWING POWER" "DAFFY DUCK"

e. "DRAWING POWER" "JONNY QUEST"

RESPONSE SHEET
PAGE 3

12.

| | ☺<br>YES, LIKE TO WATCH | ☹<br>NO, WOULDN'T LIKE TO WATCH |
|---|---|---|
| OLDER CHILDREN | ☐ | ☐ |
| CHILDREN MY AGE | ☐ | ☐ |
| YOUNGER CHILDREN | ☐ | ☐ |

13.

☐ YES

☐ NO

# Appendix D

## Researcher's Texts and Child's Response Sheet for Day 5 Questionnaire About Drawing Power and How to Watch TV

- Four Researcher Texts, One per Drawing Power Episode and How to Watch TV Drop-in

- One Child Response Sheet of Which Other Three are Similar

Post-Viewing Questionnaire for Drawing Power #1 (Supershoes)

My name is ________________ . Today I'd like to ask you some questions about the program we just watched. We'll be doing things just about the same way as yesterday. I'll ask you a question, and you'll mark down your answer on the response sheet I'll give you. I want to remind you that I'm only interested in what you think, so be sure to answer with your own ideas. Don't talk with your neighbor or show your answer to him or her.

OK, ready to begin? (PASS OUT RESPONSE SHEET). In the upper right hand corner is a place for you to write down your name and how old you are. Also, circle whether you are a boy or a girl.

It's important that we all stay together and follow my instructions. Only mark an answer on the response sheet when I ask you to, and put it where I show you. Remember to think carefully about your answer before marking it down. If you're not sure where to mark your answers, or have any other questions, raise your hand and I'll stop and help you.

1. How much did you like the Drawing Power program you just saw? A lot, some, a little, or not at all? Circle the answer which shows how much you liked the program.

2. Now I want to ask whether you liked certain parts of the program we saw today. I'll describe the part and you circle "yes" on your response sheet if you liked it and "no" if you didn't like it. If you're not sure whether or not you like it, circle the face marked "not sure" in the middle. (IF A CHILD DOESN'T REMEMBER A SEGMENT, YOU MAY REMIND THEM BY MENTIONING CHARACTERS, BUT DON'T SAY ANYTHING ABOUT PLOT. IF A CHILD STILL CAN'T IDENTIFY THAT SEGMENT, HAVE THEM SKIP THAT ITEM.)

   a. Superperson U about Supershoes
   b. Wacky World about the hippo
   c. Turkey of the Week -- about dirty Harry

d. Book Reporters -- about the Secret Garden
e. Professor Rutabaga -- about peas
f. Pet Peeves -- taking care of a pet chick/chicken
g. Lenny, Kari, & Pop -- talking about the cartoons

3. Now I'm going to read a list of ideas you might have gotten from watching the Drawing Power program we saw today. For each one, I want you to circle the "yes" on your response sheet if the program told you about that idea or "no" if it didn't. (IF A CHILD ISN'T SURE, HAVE HIM/HER MARK "NO.")

a. It's OK to be dirty or messy
b. The Secret Garden is a book about an English girl who lives in a big house and finds a mysterious garden
c. It's no fun to be dirty or messy
d. It's important to think about other people's feelings
e. You get ice cream when you have your tonsils out
f. Peas give you lots of vitamins and energy
g. Baby chicks grow up to be chickens which still need good care as a pet

4. Drawing Power has different parts to it. Each one tries to show kids things about themselves and their world. We want to know who you think each part is best for -- kids older than you, kids your age, or kids younger than you. I'm going to name some of the different parts and I want you to tell me all the people you think they are good for. (FOR EACH ITEM, BE SURE KIDS KNOW THEY CAN CHECK, 1, 2, OR 3 BOXES.)

a. The Book Reporters about The Secret Garden -- is that good for older kids? for kids your age? for younger kids?
b. Turkey of the Week -- about dirty Harry
c. Professor Rutabaga about peas

d. Superperson U about Supershoes
e. Wacky World about the hippo
f. Pet Peeves taking care of your pet chicken
g. Lenny, Kari and Pop joking and talking

5. Now I want to know how you think Drawing Power usually shows the ideas it wants you to know about -- in the cartoons -- in the talking by Lenny, Kari and Pop -- or in both the cartoons and the talking. Check the first box if the ideas mostly come from the cartoon, check the second box if they mostly come from the people, or check the third box if you think they're from both.

6. Here are some things you might do after seeing Drawing Power. I'll name the things. For each one circle "yes" on your paper if you think you might do it and "no" if you think you won't.

a. Get a copy of The Secret Garden to read
b. Be sure to keep myself and my room clean, not messy
c. Think about what it's like to be in another person's shoes
d. Be sure to include peas in my diet
e. Take good care of my pet even when it grows up

7. OK, now I want you to think about all the Drawing Power programs you have seen. We know that each program has several different stories or parts in it. Do you think Drawing Power would be better if it had longer stories, shorter stories or do you like it the way it is now? Check the first box if you think Drawing Power would be better with longer stories, the second box if it would be better with shorter stories, or the third box if it is fine the way it is now.

8. Do you remember seeing something called "How to Watch TV" on the Drawing Power program we just watched? Check either "yes" or "no."

9. Do you think it was an ad, part of the program, or something else? On your paper check the first box if you think How to Watch TV was an ad, the second box if you think it is part of the program, or the third box if you think it was something else.

10. What do you think this "How to Watch Television" story tells you? I'll say three answers, and you decide which one you think it was trying to tell you.
    a. It's good that TV tells you about different kinds of people
    b. It's good that TV tells you about people just like you
    c. It's good that TV tells you about people growing up

    If you think this story was telling you that TV tells you about different kinds of people, check "a."

    If you think this story was telling you that TV tells you about people just like you, check "b."

    If you think this story was telling you that TV tells you about people growing up, check "c."

11. Do you think that what the "How to Watch TV" story told you is important to know? YES or NO? Circle YES or NO on your paper.

12. Did you know about that before you saw this story? YES or NO? On your paper circle "Yes" if you already knew this and "No" if you didn't. (IF ANY NOs, ASK THEM "HAVE YOU WONDERED ~~ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS TO ANIMALS THAT DIE ON TV BEFORE?"~~ IF IT'S GOOD TO HAVE DIFFERENT KINDS OF PEOPLE ON TV ?) On your paper check "Yes" if you wondered about this before and "No" if you didn't. FOR YESes, HAVE THEM SKIP THIS PART.

13. Do you think what this "How to Watch TV" story told you about seeing different kinds of people is true for only Saturday morning TV shows or for all TV shows? On your paper, check the first box if you think it is only true for Saturday morning TV shows, or the second box if you think it is true for all TV shows.

# Post-Viewing Questionnaire for Drawing Power (Superpop)

My name is ___ _______________ . Today I'd like to ask you some questions about the program we just watched. We'll be doing things just about the same way as yesterday. I'll ask you a question, and you'll mark down your answer on the response sheet I'll give you. I want to remind you that I'm only interested in what you think, so be sure to answer with your own ideas. Don't talk with your neighbor or show your answer to him or her.

OK, ready to begin? (PASS OUT RESPONSE SHEET). In the upper right hand corner is a place for you to write down your name and how old you are. Also, circle whether you are a boy or a girl.

It's important that we all stay together and follow my instructions. Only mark an answer on the response sheet when I ask you to, and put it where I show you. Remember to think carefully about your answer before marking it down. If you're not sure where to mark your answers, or have any other questions, raise your hand and I'll stop and help you.

1. How much did you like the Drawing Power program you just saw? A lot, some, a little, or not at all? Circle the answer which shows how much you liked the program.

2. Now I want to ask whether you liked certain parts of the program we saw today. I'll describe the part and you circle "yes" on your response sheet if you liked it and "no" if you didn't like it. If you're not sure whether or not you like it, circle the face marked "not sure" in the middle. (IF A CHILD DOESN'T REMEMBER A SEGMENT, YOU MAY REMIND THEM BY MENTIONING CHARACTERS, BUT DON'T SAY ANYTHING ABOUT PLOT. IF A CHILD STILL CAN'T IDENTIFY THAT SEGMENT, HAVE THEM SKIP THAT ITEM.)

   a. Superperson II about Superpop
   b. Wacky World
   c. What do you do, Dad, What do you do, Mom? -- about a doctor

d. Book Reporters -- about Tom Sawyer
e. Professor Rutabaga -- about fiber in food
f. Pet Peeves -- taking care of your pet bird
g. Lenny, Kari, & Pop -- on roller skates and talking

3. Now I'm going to read a list of ideas you might have gotten from watching the Drawing Power program we saw today. For each one, I want you to circle the "yes" on your response sheet if the program told you about that idea or "no" if it didn't. (IF A CHILD ISN'T SURE, HAVE HIM/HER MARK "NO.")

a. Old people get tired a lot
b. Tom Sawyer is a book about a boy's adventures in a cave and other places
c. An orthopedic doctor is a doctor who fixes people's bones
d. Children can learn a lot of things by asking older people
e. You get ice cream when you have your tonsils out
f. It is important to eat high fiber foods
g. Pet birds need to have their cages cleaned often

4. Drawing Power has different parts to it. Each one tries to show kids things about themselves and their world. We want to know who you think each part is best for -- kids older than you, kids your age, or kids younger than you. I'm going to name some of the different parts and I want you to tell me all the people you think they are good for. (FOR EACH ITEM, BE SURE KIDS KNOW THEY CAN CHECK, 1, 2, OR 3 BOXES.)

a. The Book Reporters about Tom Sawyer -- is that good for older kids? for kids your age? for younger kids?
b. What Do You Do Dad about the doctor --
c. Professor Rutabaga about high fiber food

d. Superperson U about Superpop
e. Wacky World about funny news stories
f. Pet Peeves taking care of your pet
g. Lenny, Kari and Pop joking and talking

5. Now I want to know how you think Drawing Power usually shows the ideas it wants you to know about -- in the cartoons -- in the talking by Lennie, Carrie and Pop -- or in both the cartoons and the talking. Check the first box if the ideas mostly come from the cartoon, check the second box if they mostly come from the people, or check the third box if you think they're from both.

6. Here are some things you might do after seeing Drawing Power. I'll name the things. For each one circle "yes" on your paper if you think you might do it and "no" if you think you won't.

a. Get a copy of Tom Sawyer to read
b. Ask older people for help more often
c. Think about being a doctor when I grow up
d. Be sure to include fiber in my diet
e. Feed my pet regularly and clean its cage if it has one

7. OK, now I want you to think about all the Drawing Power programs you have seen. We know that each program has several different stories or parts in it. Do you think Drawing Power would be better if it had longer stories, shorter stories or do you like it the way it is now? Check the first box if you think Drawing Power would be better with longer stories, the second box if it would be better with shorter stories, or the third box if it is fine the way it is now.

8. Do you remember seeing something called "How to Watch TV" on the Drawing Power program we just watched? Check either "yes" or "no."

9. Do you think it was an ad, part of the program, or something else? On your paper check the first box if you think How to Watch TV was an ad, the second box if you think it is part of the program, or the third box if you think it was something else.

10. What do you think this "How to Watch Television" story tells you? I'll say three answers, and you decide which one you think it was trying to tell you.

a. When animals die on TV, they are really dead.
b. When animals die on TV, they aren't really dead. They are just pretending.
c. When animals die on TV, they get real sick or hurt and nearly die. Then later a doctor fixes them.

If you think How to Watch TV was telling you animals are really dead, check "a."
If you think it said they are just pretending, check "b."
If you think it said they get real close to dying, check "c."

11. Do you think that what the "HTWTV" told you is important to know? YES or NO? Circle Yes or No on your paper.

12. Did you know about that before you saw this story? YES or NO? On your paper circle "Yes" if you already knew this and "No" if you didn't. (IF ANY NOs, ASK THEM "HAVE YOU WONDERED ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS TO ANIMALS THAT DIE ON TV BEFORE?") On your paper check "Yes" if you wondered about this before and "No" if you didn't. FOR YESes, HAVE THEM SKIP THIS PART.

13. Do you think what this "HTWTV" told you about animals on TV is true for only Saturday morning TV shows or for all TV shows? On your paper, check the first box if you think it is only true for Saturday morning TV shows, or the second box if you think it is true for all TV shows.

# Post-Viewing Questionnaire for Drawing Power (Instant Replay)

My name is ____________________ . Today I'd like to ask you some questions about the program we just watched. We'll be doing things just about the same way as yesterday. I'll ask you a question, and you'll mark down your answer on the response sheet I'll give you. I want to remind you that I'm only interested in what you think, so be sure to answer with your own ideas. Don't talk with your neighbor or show your answer to him or her.

OK, ready to begin? (PASS OUT RESPONSE SHEET). In the upper right hand corner is a place for you to write down your name and how old you are. Also, circle whether you are a boy or a girl.

It's important that we all stay together and follow my instructions. Only mark an answer on the response sheet when I ask you to, and put it where I show you. Remember to think carefully about your answer before marking it down. If you're not sure where to mark your answers, or have any other questions, raise your hand and I'll stop and help you.

1. How much did you like the Drawing Power program you just saw? A lot, some, a little, or not at all? Circle the answer which shows how much you liked the program.

2. Now I want to ask whether you liked certain parts of the program we saw today. I'll describe the part and you circle "yes" on your response sheet if you liked it and "no" if you didn't like it. If you're not sure whether or not you like it, circle the face marked "not sure" in the middle. (IF A CHILD DOESN'T REMEMBER A SEGMENT, YOU MAY REMIND THEM BY MENTIONING CHARACTERS, BUT DON'T SAY ANYTHING ABOUT PLOT. IF A CHILD STILL CAN'T IDENTIFY THAT SEGMENT, HAVE THEM SKIP THAT ITEM.)

   a. Superperson U about Instant Replay
   b. Wacky World -- one about the big fish, and one about the Wall of China
   c. What do you do Dad, What do you do, Mom -- about the dairy farm

d. Turkey of the Week -- about Willy Tell

e. Professor Rutabaga -- about salt

f. Lenny, Kari, & Pop -- talking about the cartoons

3. Now I'm going to read a list of ideas you might have gotten from watching the Drawing Power program we saw today. For each one, I want you to circle the "yes" on your response sheet if the program told you about that idea or "no" if it didn't. (IF A CHILD ISN'T SURE, HAVE HIM/HER MARK "NO.")

a. It's OK to tell on people all the time.

b. Before you do something, think about what will happen if I do it

c. People won't listen to you if you're always telling on someone

d. A dairy farmer is someone who gets milk from cows

e. You get ice cream when you have your tonsils out

f. You don't need to add salt to all your food

4. Drawing Power has different parts to it. Each one tries to show kids things about themselves and their world. We want to know who you think each part is best for -- kids older than you, kids your age, or kids younger than you. I'm going to name some of the different parts and I want you to tell me all the people you think they are good for. (FOR EACH ITEM, BE SURE KIDS KNOW THEY CAN CHECK, 1, 2, or 3 BOXES.)

a. Turkey of the Week about Willy Tell -- is that good for older kids? for kids your age? for younger kids?

b. What do you do, Dad, what do you do, Mom -- about the dairy farm

c. Professor Rutabaga about salt

d. Superperson U about Instant Replay

e. Wacky World -- one about the big fish -- one about the Wall of China

f. Lenny, Kari, and Pop joking and talking

5. Now I want to know how you think Drawing Power usually shows the ideas it wants to know about -- in the cartoons -- in the talking by Lenny, Kari, and Pop -- or in both the cartoons and the talking. Check the first box if the ideas mostly come from the cartoon, check the second box if they mostly come from the people, or check the third box if you think they're from both.

6. Here are some things you might do after seeing Drawing Power. I'll name the things. For each one circle "yes" on your paper if you think you might do it and "no" if you think you won't.

   a. Be careful not to tell on people all the time
   b. Think about being a dairy farmer when I grow up
   c. Try a bite of food without salt next time I eat
   d. Before I do something, think about what will happen if I do it

7. O.K., now I want you to think about all the Drawing Power programs you have seen. We know that each program has several different stories or parts in it. Do you think Drawing Power would be better if it had longer stories, shorter stories or do you like it the way it is now? Check the first box if you think Drawing Power would be better with longer stories, the second box if it would be better with shorter stories, or the third box if it is fine the way it is now.

8. Do you remember seeing something called "How to Watch TV" on the Drawing Power program we just watched? Check either "yes" or "no."

9. Do you think it was an ad, part of the program, or something else? On your paper check the first box if you think How to Watch TV was an ad, the second box if you think it is part of the program, or the third box if you think it was something else.

10. What do you think this "How to Watch Television" story tells you? I'll say three answers, and you decide which one you think it was trying to tell you.

    a. Advertisers pay money to show their products in TV commercials
    b. Advertisers get to show their products for free in TV commercials
    c. Advertisers show their products in TV commercials because they're proud of them

    If you think this story was telling you that advertisers pay money to show their products in TV commercials, -- check "a."

    If you think this story was telling you that advertisers get to show their products for free in TV commercials, -- check "b."

    If you think this story was telling you that advertisers show their products in TV commercials because they're proud of them, -- check "c."

11. Do you think that the "How to Watch TV" story told you is important to know? YES or NO? Circle YES or NO on your paper.

12. Did you know about that before you saw this story? YES or NO? On your paper circle "Yes" if you already knew this and "No" if you didn't. (IF ANY NOs, ASK THEM "HAVE YOU WONDERED WHY COMMERCIALS ARE ON TV?) On your paper check "Yes" if you wondered about this before and "No" if you didn't. For YESes, HAVE THEM SKIP THIS PART.

13. Do you think what this "How to Watch TV" story told you about commercials on TV is true for only Saturday morning TV shows or for all TV shows? On your paper, check the first box if you think it is only true for Saturday morning TV shows, or the second box if you think it is true for all TV shows.

## Post-Viewing Questionnaire for Drawing Power #4 (Law and Order)

My name is ____________________ . Today I'd like to ask you some questions about the program we just watched. We'll be doing things just about the same way as yesterday. I'll ask you a question, and you'll mark down your answer on the response sheet I'll give you. I want to remind you that I'm only interested in what you think, so be sure to answer with your own ideas. Don't talk with your neighbor or show your answer to him or her.

OK, ready to begin? (PASS OUT RESPONSE SHEET). In the upper right hand corner is a place for you to write down your name and how old you are. Also, circle whether you are a boy or a girl.

It's important that we all stay together and follow my instructions. Only mark an answer on the response sheet when I ask you to, and put it where I show you. Remember to think carefully about your answer before marking it down. If you're not sure where to mark your answers, or have any other questions, raise your hand and I'll stop and help you.

1. How much did you like the Drawing Power program you just saw? A lot, some, a little, or not at all? Circle the answer which shows how much you liked the program.

2. Now I want to ask whether you liked certain parts of the program we saw today. I'll describe the part and you circle "yes" on your response sheet if you liked it and "no" if you didn't like it. If you're not sure whether or not you like it, circle the face marked "not sure" in the middle. (IF A CHILD DOESN'T REMEMBER A SEGMENT, YOU MAY REMIND THEM BY MENTIONING CHARACTERS, BUT DON'T SAY ANYTHING ABOUT PLOT. IF A CHILD STILL CAN'T IDENTIFY THAT SEGMENT, HAVE THEM SKIP THAT ITEM.)

   a. Superperson U about Law and Order
   b. Wacky World -- one about the artist and the monkey, and one about the bulldozer
   c. What do you do Dad, What do you do, Mom -- about a metereologist

d. Book Reporters -- about Gulliver's Travels
e. Professor Rutabaga -- about celery
f. Lenny, Kari, & Pop -- talking about the cartoons

3. Now I'm going to read a list of ideas you might have gotten from watching the Drawing Power program we saw today. For each one, I want you to circle the "yes" on your response sheet if the program told you about that idea or "no" if it didn't. (IF A CHILD ISN'T SURE, HAVE HIM/HER MARK "NO.")

   a. It's O.K. if just a few people don't obey the rules
   b. Gulliver's Travels is a book report about an Englishman who goes to an island of tiny people, and then one with great big people
   c. Things work out right when everyone follows the rules
   d. A meteorologist is someone who figures out what the weather will be like
   e. You get ice cream when you have your tonsils out
   f. Celery is good for you, and goes "crunch" when you eat it

4. Drawing Power has different parts to it. Each one tries to show kids things about themselves and their world. We want to know who you think each part is best for -- kids older than you, kids your age, or kids younger than you. I'm going to name some of the different parts and I want you to tell me all the people you think they are good for. (FOR EACH ITEM, BE SURE KIDS KNOW THEY CAN CHECK, 1, 2, or 3 BOXES.)

   a. The Book Reporters about Gulliver's Travels -- is that good for older kids? for kids your age? for younger kids?
   b. What do you do, Dad, what do you do, Mom -- about a meteorologist
   c. Professor Rutabaga about celery
   d. Superperson U about Law and Order
   e. Wacky World -- one about the artist and the monkey -- one about the bulldozer
   f. Lenny, Kari, and Pop joking and talking

5. Now I want to know how you think Drawing Power usually shows the ideas it wants to know about -- in the cartoons -- in the talking by Lenny, Kari, and Pop -- or in both the cartoons and the talking. Check the first box if the ideas mostly come from the cartoon, check the second box if they mostly come from the people, or check the third box if you think they're from both.

6. Here are some things you might do after seeing Drawing Power. I'll name the things. For each one circle "yes" on your paper if you think you might do it and "no" if you think you won't.

   a. Get a copy of Gulliver's Travels to read
   b. Be sure to follow the rules, like not cutting in line
   c. Think about being a meteorologist when I grow up
   d. Be sure to include celery in my diet

7. O.K., now I want you to think about all the Drawing Power programs you have seen. We know that each program has several different stories or parts in it. Do you think Drawing Power would be better if it had longer stories, shorter stories or do you like it the way it is now? Check the first box if you think Drawing Power would be better with longer stories, the second box if it would be better with shorter stories, or the third box if it is fine the way it is now.

8. Do you remember seeing something called "How to Watch TV" on the Drawing Power program we just watched? Check either "yes" or "no."

9. Do you think it was an ad, part of the program, or something else? On your paper check the first box if you think How to Watch TV was an ad, the second box if you think it is part of the program, or the third box if you think it was something else.

10. What do you think this "How to Watch Television" story tells you? I'll say three answers, and you decide which one you think it was trying to tell you.

    a. Planning your time is important so you can do homework and watch TV, too
    b. There's usually enough time to watch TV and do all your other chores, like homework
    c. When you plan what TV programs you want to watch, you don't need to think about time for homework

    If you think this story was telling you that planning your time is important so you can do homework and watch TV, too, check "a."

    If you think this story was telling you there's usually enough time to watch TV and do all your other chores, like homework, check "b."

    If you think this story was telling you when you plan what TV programs you want to watch, you don't need to think about time for homework, check, "c."

11. Do you think that the "How to Watch TV" story told you is important to know? YES or NO? Circle YES or NO on your paper.

12. Did you know about that before you saw this story? YES or NO? On your paper circle "Yes" if you already knew this and "No" if you didn't. (IF ANY NOs, ASK THEM "HAVE YOU WONDERED WHETHER OR NOT IT'S IMPORTANT TO PLAN YOUR TIME FOR WATCHING TV?) On your paper check "Yes" if you wondered about this before and "No" if you didn't. For YESes, HAVE THEM SKIP THIS PART.

13. Do you think what this "How to Watch TV" story told you about planning time to watch TV is true for only Saturday morning TV shows or for all TV shows? On your paper, check the first box if you think it is only true for Saturday morning TV shows, or the second box if you think it is true for all TV shows.

NAME ____________________

AGE ____________ BOY/GIRL

DATE ____________ INT. ________

SESSION ____________________

1.

| A LOT | SOME | A LITTLE | NOT AT ALL |
|---|---|---|---|
| ☺ | ☺ | 😐 | ☹ |

2.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| SUPERPERSON U | ☺<br>LIKE | 😐<br>NOT SURE | ☹<br>DON'T LIKE |
| WACKY WORLD | ☺<br>LIKE | 😐<br>NOT SURE | ☹<br>DON'T LIKE |
| WHAT DO YOU DO, DAD | ☺<br>LIKE | 😐<br>NOT SURE | ☹<br>DON'T LIKE |
| BOOK REPORTERS | ☺<br>LIKE | 😐<br>NOT SURE | ☹<br>DON'T LIKE |
| PROFESSOR RUTABAGA | ☺<br>LIKE | 😐<br>NOT SURE | ☹<br>DON'T LIKE |
| LENNY, KARI, & POP | ☺<br>LIKE | 😐<br>NOT SURE | ☹<br>DON'T LIKE |

3. a.. YES NO

b. YES NO

c. YES NO

d. YES NO

e. YES NO

f. YES NO

| 4. | OLDER CHILDREN | CHILDREN MY AGE | YOUNGER CHILDREN |
|---|---|---|---|
| BOOK REPORTERS | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| WHAT DO YOU DO, DAD | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| PROFESSOR RUTABAGA | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| SUPERPERSON U | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| WACKY WORLD | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| LENNY, KARI, & POP | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

5. CARTOONS ☐ LENNY, KARI, & POP ☐ BOTH ☐

6. a. READ GULLIVER'S TRAVELS YES NO

b. FOLLOW THE RULES YES NO

c. THINK ABOUT BEING A METEOROLOGIST YES NO

d. EAT CELERY YES NO

7. LONGER STORIES ☐ SHORTER STORIES ☐ FINE AS IT IS ☐

8. YES NO

9. AD ☐ PROGRAM ☐ SOMETHING ELSE ☐

10. A ☐ B ☐ C ☐

11. YES NO

12. YES NO

( YES NO )

13. SATURDAY MORNING ONLY ☐ ALL TV SHOWS ☐

# Appendix E

## Researcher's Text for Day 4 Interview About Drawing Power and How to Watch TV

Now I want to ask each of you some questions in a little more detail, so I'll need to talk with each of you one at a time. While you are waiting until it's your turn, I'd like you to draw a picture about your favorite Saturday morning television program. Do this on the back of the sheet I'll give you.

(REMOVE FIRST CHILD OUT OF EARSHOT OF OTHERS, TAKE THEIR RESPONSE SHEET, AND WRITE RESPONSES FOR THEM.)

Now, I'm going to jot down your answers when I ask you these last questions.

(IF CHILD ANSWERED YES ON #7, ASK)

"Tell me what you saw on TV that told you about how to watch television. Who was in it and what was it about? (WRITE DOWN BASICS) What was that trying to tell you?"

8. Think about the "Drawing Power" programs that you've seen, and tell me about one of the parts that you remember. Just tell me who was in the story and what the story was about.

(WRITE DOWN BASICS, E.G., SEGMENT TITLE, PLOT) What ideas did that part of the show give you? What things did it make you think about? (TRY TO DETERMINE IF CHILD GOT ANY MESSAGE FROM SEGMENT, E.G., WAYS TO ACT, THINGS TO DO. REPEAT PROCESS, IF POSSIBLE, UP TO _________ .)

# Appendix F

## Researcher's Text for Day 5 Interview about Drawing Power

Child's Name ____________________
Age ________ Sex ________
Ethnicity ________________
Date ____________________
Place ____________________
Interviewer ________________

## Drawing Power Post-Viewing Interview

1. I'm really interested in the ideas kids get from Drawing Power. Tell me everything you think the program you saw today was trying to tell you.

   (Write down responses. Say Good for each one. When the child seems to have run out, say "Anything else?" or "You really remember a lot about that program you just saw. Now try hard to think if there's anything else you remember about it.")

2. (If necessary repeat things mentioned in #1) Were any of these things in Drawing Power things you didn't know before?

   Tell me which ones you didn't know before. (If you feel it is necessary, read over things mentioned in #1 and ask if each was known before)

3. (Use the first idea the child gave you in #1 if that idea came from the Drawing Power he or she just saw. If not, go down the ideas until you come to one from the program just seen.)
Now let's talk more about ____(idea)____. Who told you about that in the Drawing Power program you saw today?

Probes if necessary: Was it in a cartoon?
Which one?

Was it said or done by Lenny or Karl . or Pop?
Which one?

4. Who do you think ought to see that idea on TV? Kids your age? Kids older than you? Or kids younger than you?

Why do you think ____(kids)____ should see it on TV?

5. Do you think that ____(idea)____ is something you will do in the future?

OR if above question is not appropriate for the idea, ask:
Do you agree with the idea that ______________?

Why or why not?

Child's Name ____________________

6. (For the second idea the child gave which came from the program viewed today)
Now let's talk more about __(idea)__. Who told you about that in the Drawing Power program you saw today?

Probes if necessary: Was it in a cartoon?
Which one?

Was it said or done by Lenny or Kari or Pop?
Which one?

7. Who do you think ought to see that idea on TV? Kids your age? Kids older than you? Or kids younger than you?

Why do you think __(kids)__ should see it on TV?

8. Do you think that __(idea)__ is something you will do in the future?

OR if above question is not appropriate for the idea, ask:
Do you agree with the idea that ____________________?

Why or why not?

9. (Look at the child's answer to question 7 in the questionnaire he or she completed today -- it's about the length of the program segments ) Remind child of question and answer.
Why do you think that the stories in Drawing Power should be (shorter, longer, or the same length)?

10. Do you like the way Drawing Power tries to give you ideas or teach you things? Why or why not? (Then explore idea of pushiness if it hasn't come up already. Possible questions: "Do you think Drawing Power tries too hard to tell you what's good to do?" "Do you think the program is sort of giving you too many orders or lectures about how to act?")

11. Here's the last question. Remember I told you that the people at NBC will use what you tell us to help them make better TV for kids? Well, they will. So, do you have anything else you want me to tell them, so they can make better TV for kids? How can they make Drawing Power better?

# Appendix G

# Participant Recruitment for Play Alongs

- Letter of Introduction to Parents

- Consent Form for Participation

- Project Description

THE ANNENBERG SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATIONS
at the University of Southern California
University Park,
Los Angeles, California 90007

Dear Parents:

I am writing to ask that you and your child participate in a research project which we are conducting for NBC. The project will provide them with information on children's opinions of some of their program material and what they get out of it. NBC will use the information to improve their programming, and we may publish the information in professional journals. The administrator of your child's school is interested in the project and has allowed us to contact you through the school.

The project looks specifically at programming designed either to teach children about television or to encourage their active participation in the television viewing experience. The participation programming is broadcast during the "Flintstones Comedy Show" on Saturday morning from 8:00 to 9:30AM, so we want to work with children who have watched the "Flintstones Comedy Show" at least twice in the last two months. If your child has watched this program recently and if you think you might be willing to participate in our project, then please read on.

If you and your child agree to participate in the project, this is what will happen. You or another teenage or adult member of your family will attend one meeting (about half hour long) to learn how to observe your child watch the "Flintstones Comedy Show" and to write down what he or she does. You will also learn how to complete a questionnaire yourself and how to interview your child. You or the other family member will then observe your child watch the Flintstones on Saturday morning. Then you will interview the child and complete an observer questionnaire for yourself. Finally, you will return all of the information to me. All of this will take about two hours to complete. As a token of appreciation, you will receive a gift of $10 for your help.

If you are unable to attend one of the training meetings, but still wish to participate, we can mail the instructions and materials to you. If you prefer this, indicate so on your consent form (the attached page) by checking the box at the bottom of the form marked "MAIL MATERIALS." Soon after you receive the materials, one of the researchers for this project will contact you on the telephone to make certain all the instructions are clear, and answer any questions you might have.

In our experience children and adults enjoy this kind of project and usually learn something from it. There are no known bad effects. If, however, a family should not want to finish the project, we would certainly agree to that. We keep all information from individuals and families anonymous and confidential.

We think that this project is worthwhile. It should be informative and fun, and it will help NBC to improve its children's programming. If you should want to know more about it, please feel free to read the detailed description on file in the administrator's office or to call me or the research assistants.

If you are willing to participate, please fill out and sign the enclosed permission slip. Have your child return it to his or her teacher tomorrow. Thank you.

Aimee Dorr

| | |
|---|---|
| Aimee Dorr, Ph.D. | Cathy Doubleday, Peter Kovaric, Dale Kunkel |
| Project Director | Graduate Student Research Assistants |
| 743-2255 | 743-7406 ext. 36 |

This is to certify that I ____________________________ agree that my child _____________ and I or another teenage or adult member of my family will participate in the research project "Evaluation of Prosocial Television Programming for Children -- At Home Viewing Project." The research is under the supervision of Dr. Aimee Dorr, a faculty member at the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Southern California. The research project has been fully explained to me, and I understand that it will involve the following special procedures:

* My child will watch the "Flintstones Comedy Show" at home on Saturday morning.

* I or another teenage or adult member of my family will observe my child at this time and write down what she or he does.

* I or the teenage or adult member of my family will then interview my child and also answer some questions about my child.

* I or the teenage or adult member of my family who does this work will attend a training session conducted by Dr. Dorr or one of her research assistants before the research begins

OR

The instructions and materials for the project will be mailed to me and Dr. Dorr or one of her research assistants will contact me on the telephone to make certain I understand the procedures involved.

* I will return all information gathered at home to Dr. Dorr.

* There are no known bad effects of this research. My family will probably enjoy it and may learn something.

* We may withdraw from the project at any time.

* All questions I have will be answered by Dr. Dorr or her research assistants

* All information from my child and family will be kept confidential and anonymous

* The information from the project will be used by NBC to improve its programming for children and may be used by the researchers for scientific reports

* Our family will receive a gift of $10 as a small thank you.

CHECK ONE:

☐ I will attend the training meeting.

☐ Mail me the materials.

________________________________ ________________________________ PARENT'S SIGNATURE ________________ DATE

________________________________ MAILING ADDRESS

________________ CHILD'S AGE ________________ CHILD'S SEX ________________ TELEPHONE NUMBER

THE ANNENBERG SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATIONS
at the University of Southern California
University Park,
Los Angeles, California 90007

## Project Description
## Evaluation of Prosocial Television Programming for Children
## At Home Viewing Project

We are teachers and researchers at the Annenberg School of Communications at USC. We are interested in evaluating some children's television programming now being broadcast on Saturday morning by NBC. Children and family members who participate will be asked their opinions of programming designed to teach them about television and to encourage children's active involvement in viewing. In addition, children's reactions to some programming will be observed while they are watching it at home on Saturday morning. The results of our study will be used by NBC in the development of improved children's programming for next year. They may also be published by us in professional journals.

Children who participate in the project will be observed by a teenage or adult member of their family while watching the "Flintstones Comedy Show" on television in their homes. The program is 1½ hours in length, and is broadcast from 8:00 to 9:30 AM on Saturday mornings.

Family "observers" will meet together with Dr. Dorr or one of her research assistants before the first home observations are done. At this time, family "observers" will be taught any special procedures for writing down what their children do during the time the "Flintstones Comedy Show" is on the air, answering some questions about the child, and writing down the child's answers to some questions. Procedures for returning this information to Dr. Dorr will also be explained. If observers are unable to attend a training meeting, the materials will be sent home and followed by a telephone call from Dr. Dorr or one of her research assistants to insure all instructions are clear.

As far as we know, participating in this research project should be fun for the family. Almost every child we have ever worked with has enjoyed sharing opinions about television, and children usually learn something about themselves when they do. Adults and older brothers or sisters who participate in the project should learn something about themselves, too, as well as a little about how social science research is done.

In order to make sure this is a pleasant experience for the family, we will do the following things: 1) only work with a family if we have permission to do so, 2) tell each family that they can stop participating at any time, 3) tell each family how their participation will help us, and 4) answer any questions that the family may have about what we are doing.

In all of the work we do, we will only be talking about children and families as a group. We will never identify individuals. Moreover, all of our records will be kept in such a way that no one will know what any particular member of a family has said or written. This is to insure the family's privacy, and because we are only concerned with what children and adults say as groups.

At the conclusion of the project a monetary gift will be given to each family or to the Oneonta PTA should the family so choose as a small thank you. If anyone wants to talk about the project, they are invited to call one of us at the numbers listed below.

| | |
|---|---|
| Aimee Dorr<br>Associate Professor<br>Project Director<br>743-2255 | Peter Kovaric, Dale Kunkel, or Cathy Doubleday<br>Graduate Student Research Assistants<br>743-7406 ext. 36 |

# Appendix H

## Observer Information for Home Observations of Children's Viewing of Play Alongs

- Cover Letter to Parents in Home Observation Packet

- Instructions to Family Observers

THE ANNENBERG SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATIONS
at the University of Southern California
University Park.
Los Angeles, California 90007

Dear Parents:

Thank you for your willingness to participate in the research project we are conducting for NBC. As you know, this project examines children's responses to segments within the "Flintstones Comedy Show" broadcast on Saturday mornings from 8:00 to 9:30 AM on channel 4.

All the materials necessary to participate in the project are enclosed, and you should find them easy to understand. Here's what we would like you to do:

1. Read the Directions for At-Home Observation.
2. Briefly review the Activity Sheet, Child Questionnaire, and Observer Questionnaire.
3. Jot down any questions you have about these materials, or any items you don't understand.
4. A few days after you've received this package, one of the researchers working on this project will contact you on the telephone to answer any questions you might have and make sure you understand the basic procedures.
5. On the next Saturday after we contact you on the telephone, watch the "Flintstones Comedy Show" with your child from 8:00-9:30 AM, filling out the Activity Sheet during the program.
6. Immediately after the program, ask your child the questions from the Child Questionnaire and Interview Form. Afterwards, complete the Observer Questionnaire yourself.
7. Return the completed Activity Sheet, Child Questionnaire and Interview, and Observer Questionnaire by placing them in the large pre-addressed envelope and sending it back to school with your child.

All of this will only take about two hours of your time to complete. As a token of appreciation, we will send you a gift of $10 when we receive your completed forms.

We think that this project is worthwhile. It should be informative and fun, and it will help NBC to improve its children's programming. Thank you for your cooperation.

Aimee Dorr, Ph.D.
Project Director
(213) 743-2255

Cathy Doubleday, Peter Kovaric, Dale Kunkel
Graduate Student Research Assistants
(213) 743-7406 ext. 36

## DIRECTIONS FOR AT-HOME OBSERVATION

## ANNENBERG-USC AND NBC PROJECT

### INTRODUCTION

This research project is designed to obtain information about children's responses to NBC programming on Saturday mornings from 8:00-9:30. This programming includes The Flintstones Comedy Show, commercials, public service announcements, Ask NBC News, and Play-Alongs. Play-Alongs are programming which suggests activities that children can participate in while they watch, or in some cases when they are not watching. The research is primarily focused on the Play-Alongs and the ways in which children respond to them.

The information we want can be gathered by parents, or by teenage or older brothers or sisters, or other adult family members. One of these people will observe children watching The Flintstones Comedy Show at home and write down the observations on the forms provided on two Saturdays in February. After writing down the observations for the second Saturday, the observer will interview the child and fill out a short questionnaire for the child and another short questionnaire for herself or himself.

### OBSERVATION INSTRUCTIONS

You (the observer) should turn on channel 4 at 8:00 (or a few minutes before) if it is not already on. If the television is already on and tuned to another channel, you should change the channel to channel 4. You should make some remark like, "I'd like to have The Flintstones on this morning" when turning on the program. Try to have the child watch at least the first five minutes of The Flintstones. After that, let the child change the channel or leave the room if he or she wants to. But be ready to start observing again if the child starts watching The Flintstones again.

The observer should position himself or herself so that both the child and the television screen are visible, and should try not to make the child self-conscious about being observed. If the child should ask, or it is appropriate before the observation period begins, the observer should tell the child that she or he is doing a job for people at USC and NBC who want to find out what kids do when they watch television.

Here is how to use the observation form. The observer identification information and the date should be filled out in advance at the top of each page. The "Child's Activity" and "Program Content" columns are to be filled out while you observe the child. The "Time/Type of Segment" column identifies the programming by time and type of segment, for instance: 8:00 -- cartoon, 8:35 -- commercial, and so on. It will help you to know ahead of time what will be on the screen. On page 4 there is a description of the types of segments which will appear between 8:00 and 9:30, so you will understand what we mean by "Public Service Announcement," "Cartoon," and so on.

The center column is for recording the Child's Activity while watching each segment. This is the most important information to write down. On page 5 there is a list of the types of activities that children often engage in while watching television. Naturally all children are different, so they are likely to do some of the things on the list but not others. They may also do things which are not on the list. Whether included on the list or not, you should write down whatever the child does while in the room with the television. We are interested in what children do for each type of program content. So be sure to write that down for each one. If the child leaves the room it is not necessary for you to follow him or her, but it is necessary that you remain near the television and ready to observe further should the child return.

The last column on the right is to record any special characteristic of Program Content which is occuring on the screen when an activity is recorded. For instance, if the Program Type is a commercial, you would write down what the product is and what was happening in the commercial when the child responded. If the Programming Type is a cartoon, you would write down the name of the cartoon (if possible) and what was happening in it when the child responded.

When writing down observations, you should try to be as specific as possible in describing the child's actions. For instance, if the child smiles at something on the screen, you should record that the child smiled, not that the child liked or was pleased by what occurred. It is important that the actions recorded are actions which could be observed by almost any adult without requiring special knowledge about the particular child.

Points to remember for observation:

1. A little before 8:00AM get the observation sheets and pen or pencil ready.

2. Get yourself in a position to see both the child and the TV.

3. Turn on The Flintstones Comedy Show at 8:00AM on channel 4 and have the child start watching it.

4. After that let the child change the channel or leave the room if he or she wants.

5. Describe concretely what the child does.

6. Only do this for children 6-11 years old. If you have more than one child in this age range, either choose one child for the observation or keep separate records for each of them.

## Types of Program Segments

| | |
|---|---|
| Product Commercials - | messages about products (usually food or toys on Saturday morning) usually about 30 seconds long |
| Public Service Announcements - | messages about health, safety, sports conditioning or rules, or other socially desirable activities, usually about 30 seconds to 1 minute long |
| Ask NBC News - | news stories in simplified form for children, reported by regular NBC staff, usually about 1 minute long |
| Cartoons - | humorous animated stories which include the regular "cast" of The Flintstones: Fred, Barney, Wilma, Betty, Bam-Bam, Pebbles, Dino, Frankenstone, Captain Caveman, the Shmoo, and so on, usually about 8 minutes long |
| Play-Alongs - | messages about activities which the viewer can engage in while watching the program, or at some other time, usually about 1 minute long, mostly featuring Flintstones characters<br>Symphonies -- classical or semi-classical music illustrated with actions by Flintstones characters<br>Physical Fitness -- messages about exercise, diet, or self-concept<br>Riddles -- messages in which one character asks another a riddle<br>Scrambled Faces -- messages in which a character tries to rearrange pieces of a scrambled face in order to identify it<br>Finding Words -- messages in which shorter words are made from the letters of a longer word<br>Dancing -- messages teaching children simple dance steps<br>Drawing -- messages showing step-by-step how to draw a cartoon character<br>"How To . . ." -- two part messages in which children are told (1) to get certain materials together and later (2) how to use them to build something |

## Types of Children's Activities

### Program related play & speech

- -- imitating characters' speech or actions
- -- playing a game (alone or with others) related to the actions on the screen
- -- doing what a character tells them to do
- -- talking to a character
- -- talking about a character or situation or idea (either to self or other)
- -- asking questions about what is happening on the screen
- -- dancing or body movement to music, song, or jingle
- -- participating in jokes, contests or games occuring on the screen
- -- performing some activity like that a child has seen on TV

### Other program-related activities

- -- changing the channel
- -- laughing at something on the screen
- -- leaving the room
- -- turning away from the program

### Non-program related play and speech

- -- playing with a toy or toys not related to program
- -- playing with another person (with or without toys) in a way not related to the program
- -- talking to another person about something not related to the program

### Other non-program related activities

- -- eating
- -- leaving the room to do something else

**REMEMBER:** These are just GENERAL TYPES of activities to give you an idea of what to look for. When you write down what the child does, be SPECIFIC in your description. For instance, if the child talks to a character, write down what the child says ("Watch out, Fred"), not just that he or she talked.

# Appendix I

## Activity Sheet Used by Family Observers For Home Observation of Children's Viewing of Play Alongs

CHILD'S NAME ______________________

OBSERVER'S NAME ______________________

CHILD'S AGE ______________ BOY/GIRL

OBSERVER'S RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD ______________

DATE ______________________

## ACTIVITY SHEET

| Approximate Time / Type of Segment | Child's Activity | Program Content |
|---|---|---|
| 8:00AM - Opening | | |
| 8:02 - Cartoon (Flintstone Family Adventure) | | |
| 8:13 - Play Along (Riddle) | | |
| 8:14 - Commercials | | |

| Approximate Time / Type of Segment | Child's Activity | Program Content |
|---|---|---|
| 8:15 - Play Along (Scrambled Faces) | | |
| 8:16 - Cartoon (Dino, Bamm Bamm & Pebbles -- Part I) | | |
| 8:21 - Commercials | | |
| 8:22 - Cartoon (Dino, Bamm Bamm & Pebbles -- Part II) | | |

| Approximate Time / Type of Segment | Child's Activity | Program Content |
|---|---|---|
| 8:25 - Play Along (Symphony) | | |
| 8:26 - Play Along (Riddle) | | |
| 8:27 - Play Along (How to . . . -- Part I) | | |
| 8:28 - Commercials | | |

| Approximate Time / Type of Segment | Child 's Activity | Program Content |
|---|---|---|
| 8:29 - Public Service Announcement Introduction (Sports) | | |
| 8:30 - Public Service Announcement Completion (Sports) | | |
| 8:31 - Public Service Announcement Station Break | | |
| 8:32 - Commercials | | |

| Approximate Time / Type of Segment | Child's Activity | Program Content |
|---|---|---|
| 8:33 - Cartoon<br>(The Frankenstones) | | |
| 8:44 - Play Along<br>(How to . . . -- Part 2) | | |
| 8:45 - Commercials | | |
| 8:46 - Cartoon<br>(Bedrock Cops) | | |

| Approximate Time / Type of Segment | Child's Activity | Program Content |
|---|---|---|
| 8:54 - Play Along (Finding Words) | | |
| 8:55 - Play Along (Physical Fitness) | | |
| 8:56 - Commercials | | |
| 8:58 - Ask NBC News — Introduction | | |
| Commercial | | |

| Approximate Time / Type of Segment | Child's Activity | Program Content |
|---|---|---|
| 8:59 - Ask NBC News -- Completion | | |
| 9:00 - Public Service Announcement | | |
| 9:01 - Station Break | | |
| - Commercials | | |

| Approximate Time / Type of Segment | Child's Activity | Program Content |
|---|---|---|
| 9:02 - Cartoon (Dino and Cavemouse) | | |
| 9:06 - Play Along (Dancing) | | |
| 9:07 - Play Along (Riddle) | | |
| 9:08 - Cartoon (Captain Caveman - Part I) | | |

| Approximate Time / Type of Segment | Child's Activity | Program Content |
|---|---|---|
| 9:15 - Commercials | | |
| 9:16 - Cartoon<br>(Captain Caveman -- Part 2) | | |
| 9:20 - Play Along<br>(Drawing) | | |
| 9:22 - Cartoon<br>(Dino and Cavemouse) | | |
| 9:26 - Commercials | | |

| Approximate Time | Type of Segment | Child's Activity | Program Content |
|---|---|---|---|
| 9:27 | - Credits | | |
| 9:28 | - Public Service Announcement Introduction (Sports) | | |
| | Commercial | | |
| 9:29 | - Public Service Announcement Completion (Sports) | | |
| 9:30 | - Public Service Announcement | | |
| | End of The Flintstones Comedy Show | | |

## Appendix J

## Children's Questionnaire About Play Alongs Administered by Observers

CHILD'S NAME ______________________ OBSERVER'S NAME ____________________

DATE ____________________________ RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD ______________

## CHILD QUESTIONNAIRE & INTERVIEW FORM

### OBSERVER DIRECTIONS

Before watching The Flintstones Comedy Show, fill in the requested information at the top of each page of this form. Immediately after the completion of the program, take the child aside and read the following questions, circling or writing down the child's responses where appropriate. You'll notice that most of the questionnaire is a series of questions about each of the types of Play-Alongs you're asking about, then ask all questions about it. If the child doesn't remember it, skip to the next type of Play-Along, which will be on the next page. Directions for skipping and for what to write down are included in parentheses.

Begin interview by saying to the child:

(child's name) , I have some questions that some people want me to ask you. They're about the program you just saw, The Flintstones. Most of the questions you can answer with just a "YES" or "NO," so it'll just take a few minutes to answer them. Let's do it right now while the program's still fresh in your mind, O.K.?

CHILD'S NAME ______________________________ Page 2

## GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. Did you like or not like The Flintstones?

LIKE NOT LIKE (NOT SURE)

2. (Ask, using appropriate words:)

Did you LIKE/NOT LIKE it a little or a lot?

A LITTLE A LOT

3. O.K., now think a little bit about the commercials for food and games you saw during The Flintstones. Did you like the commercials or not like them?

LIKE NOT LIKE (NOT SURE)

4. ( Ask, using appropriate words:)

Did you LIKE/NOT LIKE them a little or a lot?

A LITTLE A LOT

CHILD'S NAME ______________________________ Page 3

## SCRAMBLED FACES

1. Do you remember that part in The Flintstones where a mixed up face came on the screen and you were supposed to figure out who it was?

   YES (go to 3)    NO (go to 2)

2. Remember, there was a picture of face that was all in pieces, and they put it together a little at a time to see if you could guess who it was? Remember that?

   YES (go to 3)    NO (go to next page, Riddles)

3. Who was it? (Write down the child's answer)

4. Did you like that mixed up face part of The Flintstones or not like it?

   LIKE    NOT LIKE    (NOT SURE)

5. (Ask, using appropriate words:)
   Did you LIKE/NOT LIKE it a little or a lot?

   A LITTLE    A LOT

6. O.K., now thinking about the mixed up face part of The Flintstones, would you say they showed it to you too fast, about the right speed, or too slow?

   TOO FAST    RIGHT SPEED    TOO SLOW

7. Have you done anything like figuring out who a mixed up face is when you're not watching TV?

   YES    NO

8. Did these mixed up face things on The Flintstones give you any idea for other things to do?

   YES (go to 9)    NO (go to 10)

9. What kinds of things? (Write down child's answer)

10. How much would you like to do more stuff like figuring out who a mixed up face is -- either on TV or some place else -- a lot, a little, or not at all?

    A LOT    A LITTLE    NOT AT ALL

CHILD'S NAME ______________________________ Page 4

## RIDDLES

1. Do you remember the parts in The Flintstones where somebody asks a riddle?

   YES (go to 3) NO (go to 2)

2. Remember, somebody asks a tricky question where the answer is sort of a joke? Do you remember that?

   YES (go to 3) NO (go to next page, Symphony)

3. What were some of the riddles about? (Write down child's answer.)

4. Did you like that riddle part of the program, or not like it?

   LIKE NOT LIKE (NOT SURE)

5. (Ask, using appropriate words:)
   Did you LIKE/NOT LIKE it a little, or a lot?

   A LITTLE A LOT

6. Think about that riddle part of the program -- do you think they showed it to you too fast, about the right speed, or too slow?

   TOO FAST RIGHT SPEED TOO SLOW

7. Have you ever done anything like solving riddles when you're not watching TV -- at school, at home, or some place else?

   YES NO

8. Did these riddles give you any idea for other things to do?

   YES (go to 9) NO (go to 10)

9. What kinds of things? (Write down child's answer.)

10. How much would you like to do more stuff like figuring out riddles -- either on TV or some place else -- a lot, a little, or not at all.

    A LOT A LITTLE NOT AT ALL

CHILD'S NAME ______________________________

## SYMPHONY

1. Do you remember the part in The Flintstones where some of the chacters play instruments like in an orchestra?

YES (go to 3)    NO (go to 2)

2. Remember there are a bunch of Flintstones characters and they played music on some instruments?

YES (go to 3)    NO (go to next page, How to)

3. Did you like that music part of the Flintstones, or not like it?

LIKE    NOT LIKE    (NOT SURE)

4. (Ask, using appropriate words:)
Did you LIKE/NOT LIKE it a little or a lot?

A LITTLE    A LOT

5. Think about that part where The Flintstones characters play music -- do you think they showed it to you too fast, about the right speed, or too slow?

TOO FAST    RIGHT SPEED    TOO SLOW

6. Have you ever listened to the kind of music Fred and his friends played before -- either here at home, at school, or somewhere else?

YES    NO

7. Did this part of the program with the characters playing music give you any idea for other things to do?

YES (go to 8)    NO (go to 9)

8. What kinds of things? (Write down child's answer.)

9. How much would you like to find out about or listen to more music like the kind Fred and his friends were playing -- a lot, a little, or not at all?

A LOT    A LITTLE    NOT AT ALL

CHILD'S NAME ______________________________ Page 6

## HOW TO

1. Do you remember the part in The Flintstones where one of the characters tells you how to make something? First, they tell you what kinds of things you'll need, then a little later they tell you how to make something. Do you remember that part?

   YES (go to 3) NO (go to 2)

2. Remember, first somebody comes on and tells you to go get some things and that later they'll show you how to make something with them. Then later they show you. Do you remember that?

   YES (go to 3) NO (go to next page, Finding Words)

3. What did they show you how to make? (Write down child's response)

4. Did you like that part of the program or not like it?

   LIKE NOT LIKE (NOT SURE)

5. (Ask, using appropriate words:)
   Did you LIKE/NOT LIKE it a little or a lot?

   A LITTLE A LOT

6. Did you think that when they told you what things you needed to get they told you too fast, about the right speed, or too slow?

   TOO FAST RIGHT SPEED TOO SLOW

7. Do you think that when they told you how to make something they told you too fast, about the right speed, or too slow?

   TOO FAST RIGHT SPEED TOO SLOW

8. When they told you the things you needed to make something, could you get them all?

   YES (go to 10) NO (go to 9)

9. What couldn't you get? (Write down child's answer.)

10. Have you ever made something like the things they showed you on The Flintstones -- either here at home, at school, or someplace else?

    YES NO

11. Did this part of the show where you were taught how to make something give you any ideas for other things to do?

    YES (go to 12) NO (go to 13)

12. What kinds of things? (Write down child's answer.)

13. How much would you like to make more things like they showed on The Flintstones? -- a lot, a little, or not at all?

    A LOT A LITTLE NOT AT ALL

N.B.: This page has been photo reduced for this report.

## FINDING WORDS

1. Do you remember the part in The Flintstones where they gave you a word and asked you how many other words you can make using the letters?

   YES (go to 3)      NO (go to 2)

2. Remember, they gave you a long word and asked you to figure out what smaller words you can make by using the letters of the longer words? Do you remember that?

   YES (go to 3)      NO (go to next page, Physical Fitness)

3. What was the word? (Write down child's answer.)

4. Did you like that part where you got to make new words, or not like it?

   LIKE      NOT LIKE      (NOT SURE)

5. (Ask, using appropriate words:)
   Did you LIKE/NOT LIKE it a little, or a lot?

   A LITTLE      A LOT

6. This part of the program -- figuring out new words -- did they show it to you too fast, about the right speed, or too slow?

   TOO FAST      RIGHT SPEED      TOO SLOW

7. Have you done anything like figuring out new words at sometime when you're not watching TV -- either at home, at school, or somewhere else?

   YES      NO

8. Did figuring out the new words give you any ideas for other things to do?

   YES (go to 9)      NO (go to 10)

9. What kinds of things? (Write down child's answer.)

10. How much would you like to do more things like making new words out of the letters of a big word -- a lot, a little, or not at all?

    A LOT      A LITTLE      NOT AT ALL

## PHYSICAL FITNESS

1. Do you remember the part of The Flintstones where one of the characters -- sometimes Rock La Lanne -- tells you about an exercise you can do?

   YES (go to 3) NO (go to 2)

2. Remember, one of the Flintstones characters comes on and tells you how to do exercise or how to keep your body in good shape? Remember that?

   YES (go to 3) NO (go to next page, Dance)

3. Could you tell me or show me what the exercise is? (Write down what child says or does.)

4. Did you like that part of the program with the exercise, or not like it?

   LIKE NOT LIKE (NOT SURE)

5. (Ask, using appropriate words:)
   Did you LIKE/NOT LIKE, it a little, or a lot?

   A LITTLE A LOT

6. This part of the program -- the part about doing exercises -- did they show it to you too fast, about the right speed, or too slow?

   TOO FAST RIGHT SPEED TOO SLOW

7. Have you done any exercises on your own like those they show you on Flintstones -- either at home, at school, or somewhere else?

   YES NO

8. Did seeing those exercises on The Flintstones give you any ideas for other things to do?

   YES (go to 9) NO (go to 10)

9. What kinds of things? (Write down child's answer.)

10. How much would you like to do more things like the exercises you saw on The Flintstones -- a lot, a little, or not at all?

    A LOT A LITTLE NOT AT ALL

CHILD'S NAME ______________________________

## DANCE

1. Do you remember the part on The Flintstones where some of the characters showed how to do a dance?

YES (go to 3)    NO (go to 2)

2. Remember, there's a dance with a Flintstones name that a Flintstones person does and they give directions how to do it? Remember that?

YES (go to 3)    NO (go to next page, Drawing)

3. Could you tell me what the name of the dance was, or show me how to do it? (Write down what child says or does.)

4. Did you like that part of the show with the dancing, or not like it?

LIKE    NOT LIKE    (NOT SURE)

5. (Ask, using appropriate words:)
Did you LIKE/NOT LIKE it a little, or a lot?

A LITTLE    A LOT

6. Think about this part of the program -- where they show how to do a dance -- do they show it to you too fast, about the right speed, or too slow?

TOO FAST    RIGHT SPEED    TOO SLOW

7. Have you done any dancing on your own like what they showed on The Flintstones -- but not while you're watching TV?

YES    NO

8. Did the dancing you saw on The Flintstones give you any ideas for other things to do?

YES (go to 9)    NO (go to 10)

9. What kinds of things? (Write down child's answer.)

10. How much would you like to do more things like the dancing you saw on The Flintstones-- a lot, a little, or not at all?

A LOT    A LITTLE    NOT AT ALL

CHILD'S NAME ______________________________ Page 10

## DRAWING

1. Do you remember the part on The Flintstones where one of the characters showed how you can draw different things?

   YES (go to 3) NO (go to 2)

2. Remember, one of the characters took some shapes or something and showed you how to use them in drawing things like cartoons? Remember that?

   YES (go to 3) NO (go to next page, Finishing Up)

3. Could you tell me something about what they drew? (Write down child's answer)

4. Did you like that part of the program, or not like it?

   LIKE NOT LIKE (NOT SURE)

5. (Ask, using appropriate words:)
   Did you LIKE/NOT LIKE it a little or a lot?

   A LITTLE A LOT

6. What about that part of the program -- showing how to draw things -- did they show it to you too fast, about the right speed, or too slow?

   TOO FAST RIGHT SPEED TOO SLOW

7. Did you have things to draw with nearby when that part of the program came on?

   YES (go to 9) NO (go to 8)

8. What things didn't you have, or couldn't you get? (Write down's child's answer.)

9. Have you drawn anything on your own like what you have seen on The Flintstones?

   YES NO

10. Did the part about drawing on the Flintstones give you any ideas for other things to do.

    YES (go to 11) NO (go to 12)

11. What kinds of things? (Write down child's answer)

12. How much would you like to do more things like the drawing you saw on The Flintstones-- a lot, a little, or not at all?

    A LOT A LITTLE NOT AT ALL

CHILD'S NAME ______________________________

## FINISHING UP

1. The parts of The Flintstones that we've been talking about -- what **would** you call them? Can you give them a name?

   (Write down name, if any, then go to 3. If child has no idea, go to 2.)

2. Well, would you call them commercials, cartoons, news, games to play, or something else?

   COMMERCIALS CARTOONS NEWS GAMES SOMETHING ELSE

3. Thinking about the whole Flintstones show, the cartoons, the commercials and the parts we've been talking about -- like riddles, dancing, and drawing -- which do you like best -- cartoons, commercials, or the other parts?

4. What about second best? (Give other two choices -- write down answer.)

5. Have you ever seen on TV, either on The Flintstones or on any other program, some things that tell you about "how to watch TV," or about "a smart way to watch TV?"

   YES (go to 6) NO (Read comment at bottom of page)

6. Can you tell me what it was about, or who was in it, or what it tried to tell you about? (Encourage child to give you lots of examples and write them all down.)

O.K., that's all there is to ask. The people I'll give this to are real happy you've so helpful -- thank you very much. (Let child go play.)

AND THANK YOU FOR GETTING THIS INFORMATION FROM THE CHILD.

# Appendix K

# Observer's Self-Administered Questionnaire About Play Alongs

CHILD'S NAME ______________________ OBSERVER'S NAME ______________________

DATE ______________________ RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD ______________________

## Observer Questionnaire

Now that you have finished observing and interviewing the child, there are a few questions for you to answer. Circle or write in the appropriate answer. Before you answer the questions fill in the requested information at the top of each page.

1. a. Since school started last September, about how often would you say that the child you observed has watched The Flintstones Comedy Show on channel 4 on Saturday mornings?

   a. Just a few times
   b. About once a month
   c. A couple of times a month
   d. Almost every week

1. b. NOT COUNTING SATURDAY MORNINGS ON NBC (Channel 4), About how often would you say that the child you observed has watched The Flintstones on other channels (such as channel 11 at 8:30AM or channel 13 at 4:00PM) since school started last September?

   a. Just a few times
   b. About once a month
   c. A couple of times a month
   d. Almost every week

2. Not including any activities you observed and wrote down, have you ever noticed the child you observed talking about the Play-Alongs, either after the program is over on Saturday or at any time?

   YES NO

   If "YES," what has he or she talked about?

3. Other than during the broadcasts you have been observing for this project, have you ever noticed the child you observed engaging in the Play-Along activities either after the program is over on Saturday or at any time?

   YES NO

   If "YES," what has the child done?

OBSERVER'S NAME ____________________
Page 2

4. After observing both the Play-Alongs and the child's responses to them, what do you think about the Play-Alongs? (Circle one response for each of a, b, c, d, and e)

   a. They are paced . . . . . too fast
   . . . . . about right
   . . . . . too slow

   b. They require . . . . . too much attention
   . . . . . about the right amount of attention
   . . . . . too little attention

   c. They . . . are . . . easily distinguished from commercials
   They . . . are not . . . easily distinguished from commercials

   d. They . . . are . . . . easily distinguished from regular program content
   They . . . are not . . . easily distinguished from regular program content

   e. They require materials children . . . are . . . likely to have nearby
   They require materials children . . . are not . . . likely to have nearby

5. How good an idea do you think it is to include programming like the Play-Alongs in Saturday morning children's programming?

   a. A very good idea
   b. A moderately good idea
   c. Unsure
   d. A moderately bad idea
   e. A very bad idea

6. The Flintstones Comedy Show (not including product commercials) is made up of many segments, ranging from about a minute to eight minutes long. Almost every segment is self-contained; that is, it does not continue throughout all or a large part of the program with interruptions only for commercials. Other programs for children rely on longer stories and don't often use short segments like the Play-Alongs and news and sports inserts.

How good an idea do you think it is to have segmented programs like *The Flintstones Comedy Show* for children?

a. A very good idea
b. A moderately good idea
c. Uncertain
d. A moderately bad idea
e. A very bad idea

How good an idea do you think it is to have programs with longer stories and fewer segments for children?

a. A very good idea
b. A moderately good idea
c. Uncertain
d. A moderately bad idea
e. A very bad idea

7. Listed below are some suggestions that might be made for improving the *Play-Alongs*. Circle the letters of all those you agree with. Do not circle the ones you disagree with or are unsure about.

a. Present ideas and information more slowly
b. Present fewer ideas (or less information) in each *Play-Along*
c. Repeat ideas or information more
d. Make each *Play-Along* longer
e. Make each *Play-Along* shorter
f. Group *Play-Alongs* together in one or a few places in the 1½ hour program
g. Be more sure the materials for the *How-To* *Play-Alongs* are available to kids at home

OBSERVER'S NAME ______________________
Page 4

8. Please use this page to write down any comments you may have about the Play-Alongs, The Flintstones Comedy Show, or any other NBC programming for children.

# Appendix L

## Coding System for Play Along Activity Sheets

# Coding Instructions for the Activity Sheet
# Completed as Part of an Evaluation of Prosocial Children's Programming

Peter Kovaric, Catherine Doubleday, and Aimée Dorr

Annenberg School of Communications
University of Southern California

April 1981

## Introduction

The Activity Sheet is to be filled out by an adult or older teenage observer while a child is viewing the Flintstones Comedy Show. Observers are to describe in writing all behavior and conversation they observe while the child is in the room with the Flintstones on and to write such descriptions next to the Flintstones segments (listed on the Activity Sheet) during which they occur. Observers are also to indicate when children leave the room and return to it. In this way it is possible to obtain a fairly detailed account of what the child says and does while the program is being broadcast.

The description of children's activities is analyzed to obtain data concerning three issues: (1) how and to what extent children change attention to the Play Alongs and to all other parts of the program during the course of the broadcast; (2) how often and during what segments children change channels during the broadcast; and (3) how often and in what ways children respond to the Play Alongs. To provide data on these issues each segment of the program as listed on the Activity Sheet (except for the station breaks which are included solely to aid observers in keeping track of where they are) receives two types of scores, one for attention shifts and one for channel switching. Each Play Along also receives a third type of score for evaluative responses and participation. The following sections describe how each of these scores is coded and illustrate them with examples from some observer descriptions.

## Attention Shifts

An "Attention Shift" is defined in general as an indication by the observer that the child has gone from giving most of his or her attention to one activity (e.g., watching the Flintstones) to giving it to another activity (e.g., playing with a toy) where one of the two activities is watching the Flintstones Comedy show and the other is not. When the observer records behavior which indicates that the child has stopped watching the Flintstones Comedy Show and has begun engaging in some other activity, an attention shift score of NEGATIVE SHIFT (-1) is given. When the observer records behavior which indicates the opposite, that the child stops engaging in another behavior and returns to watching the Flintstones Comedy Show, an attention shift score of POSITIVE SHIFT (+1) is given. In the first coding of the Activity Sheets, as many of these scores are given as attention shifts occur during each diffrent segment of Flintstones Comedy Show programming.

Because attention shifts must be evaluated in relation to opportunities to shift attention and times when no shifts occurred, two other "Attention Shift" scores are used. If the Activity Sheet indicates that the child watches an entire segment of Flintstones programming without any changes in attention, an attention shift score of NO CHANGE (0) is given. If the Activity Sheet indicates that the child does not watch the segment at all, then an attention shift score of NOT WATCH (-) is given.

Negative attention shifts can only be coded if the child has been watching the Flintstones Comedy Show. Since all children begin the observational session by watching the program, the first attention shifts which can be coded are a negative shift or NO CHANGE. Following is a list of some of the types of recorded behaviors which would require a negative attention shift score. First are listed types of behaviors which would be coded as negative attention shifts. Second are listed particular behaviors, as recorded by observers, which were actually coded as negative attention shifts.

### Types of behavior

- leaving the room
- talking to the observer or someone else about a non-program-related topic
- playing with another person in a non-program related manner
- playing with an object, including him or herself, in a non-program-related manner (if described as directed play, not simply as "fiddling" with hair, hand, small object)

### Recorded behavior

- groans, tries to see what Cindy's doing
- looks out window to see "It's a nice day."
- left room
- Anthony is picking at his hair
- plays with sister
- turned away to read book
- draws (preceded Drawing Play-Along)
- "Mom, I have nobody to talk to. Will you talk to me?" (Yes)
  Now playing with baton/wiggling
- did not watch this one

Positive attention shifts can only be coded if the child has not been watching The Flintstones Comedy Show, so a positive attention shift must be preceded by a negative attention shift or NOT WATCH score. The following are examples of some of the types of recorded behaviors which would require a positive attention shift score. Types of behavior are listed first and particular examples from observational records are listed second.

Types of behavior

- returning to the room and watching The Flintstones programming
- stopping conversation or play and watching the Flintstones programming
- talking about the Flintstones programming

Recorded behavior

- sat quietly and watched with Chrissy
- comes back in room
- starts to draw along -- "Mommy I need a ruler"
- watches this part
- " Oooo Dino" laughs "Aw shucks"
- laughed when Dino got banana in face
- "We have that"
- did not participate, but is looking
- Rudy lying on floor just looking

No change in attention is coded any time the observer's entry, lack of entry, or sequence of entries on the Activity Sheet indicate that the child continues to observe the Flintstones programming throughout a segment. The following are examples of some types of recorded behaviors which would require a no change score. Types of behavior are listed first and particular examples from observational records are listed second.

Types of behavior

- no entry during the segment (entries immediately preceding and succeeding it indicate child is viewing)
- conversation related to programming being broadcast
- behavior related to programming being broadcast

Recorded behavior

- P stretches, then settles back in his chair
- little sister walks in the room - "Go away, I'm watching this show"
- no response
- M - comment about which Star Wars figures his friend owns
- watched intently
- "This is what I like -- the schmoo" sucking thumb watching and eating cereal
- lays down on couch to watch
- sang Bum, Bum, Bum, Bum, Bum, Bump, Bump to music & raised his arms
- repeated words on announcement

Because of the complexity of children's behavior and variety in observers' descriptions, several coding problems have to be dealt with. First, each segment of programming receives only one summary attention score. If an observer's description indicated changing attention more than once within a segment (e.g., leaving the room (-1), returning to the room (+1), leaving the room (-1)), each change is coded and the segment is assigned the algebraic sum of the within- segment scores. Second, when observers do not write any descriptions opposite a segment and the immediately preceeding and succeeding entries indicate the child is watching, that segment is scored no change (0). The only exception to this is when the previous segment has received a negative score and a subsequent segment also seems to require a negative score, indicating that at some point in between the two segments the child has resumed watching the Flintstones. If after a careful reading of the entire Activity Sheet, no other reasonable inferences based on the rest of the observer's data can be made about the problem segment, that segment is given a score of positive attention shift. Third, when one coder cannot decide on the appropriate score, another coder is consulted. The score given is then decided by agreement of the two coders.

## Channel Switching

"Channel Switching" is defined as observers reporting the child changing the channel to a station other than KNBC, changing from another station to KNBC, or not changing the channel at all. These three situations are respectively coded as NEGATIVE SWITCH (-1), POSITIVE SWITCH (+1), and NO CHANGE (0). All segments during which the child is in the room receive a channel switching score. If someone other than the child being observed changes the channel, the child's score is coded NO CHANGE (0).

In a sense, channel switching is a special case of attention shifts, so it was decided not to code attention shifts for those segments which receive a negative or positive channel switching score or during which the television is tuned to another channel. Thus loss of attention due to channel switching is not recorded twice.

The occurrences of channel switching were rare and unambiguous in the evaluation data. Following are two recorded examples of channel switching from the Activity Sheets:

- "It's time to turn" Change Ch. 2
- turns channel - leaves room - comes back

## Evaluative Responses and Participation

"Evaluative Responses and Participation" are defined in general as an indication by the observers that a child responds to the Play-Along segment being broadcast in some positive or negative manner, actually participated in a Play Along activity as it is broadcast, or states an intention or desire to perform that activity.

When the observer's description indicated that the child does not like the Play Along, thinks it is silly, impossible to do, or in general uninteresting, the evaluative response score for that Play Along is coded as a NEGATIVE RESPONSE (-1). When the observer's description indicates that the child likes the Play Along, is interested in the activity presented, has had an enjoyable experience in the past doing something similar, or the like, the evaluative response score for that Play Along is coded as a POSITIVE RESPONSE (+1). When the observer's description indicates that the child actively participates or attempts to participate in the Play Along, either verbally by giving answers or stating intention to do the activity, or behaviorally by acting out or mimicking some or all of the activity, the participation score is coded PARTICIPATION (+2). Finally, if the observer's description indicates that the child makes no response at all to The Play Along, either positive or negative or participatory, the evaluative response and participation score is coded NO RESPONSE (0). Each Play Along was given only one score for evaluative response and participation. Where there was any option about that score to give, preference was given first to +2, participation, then to +1, positive response, and then to -1, negative response.

Because the content of each type of Play Along is different from the other types, it was necessary to develop a set of fairly concrete criteria for each type of response to each Play Along. Listed at the end of this section are, first, a set of general criteria which apply to all Play Alongs, second, criteria which are specific to each individual Play Along, and third, examples of observer descriptions which would be coded into each category.

The response "I've done that before" is particularly troublesome to code, because its meaning is ambiguous. It could be a positive comment about having already done something that is now being shown on television or knowing how to do something being shown on television. It could also be a negative comment that the Play Along activity was hackneyed, old hat, childish, or unchallenging. To determine how to code the response, coders are to review the entire Activity Sheet for clues to its meaning. If after that, the intent of the statement is still indeterminable, such a response is coded as POSITIVE, unless phrased as "I've done that already" or "I've already done that", which are coded as NEGATIVE.

## Coding Criteria

| Criteria for All Play Alongs | NEGATIVE RESPONSE | POSITIVE RESPONSE | PARTICIPATION |
|---|---|---|---|
| | verbal or behavioral indication of dislike of particular activity portrayed in Play Along, or of that type of activity in general, including verbal descriptors such as stupid dull, boring, dumb, old, etc. | verbal or behavioral indication of liking particular activity portrayed in Play Along, or of that type of activity in general, including laughter and such verbal descriptors as funny, fun, neat, interesting, etc. | verbal or behavioral indication of desire or intention to do some or all of activity portrayed in Play Along |
| Additional Criteria for Particular Play Alongs | | | |
| Symphony | -- | -- | clapping hands, tapping feet or otherwise keeping time; imitating musicians |
| Fitness | -- | -- | doing some or all of exercise |
| Riddle | -- | -- | answering riddle; indicating knowledge of answer; guessing at answer |
| Faces | dislike of particular character | liking of particular character | guessing character; indicating knowledge of answer |
| Words | -- | cheering as characters guess words | guessing scrambled or other words; indicating prior knowledge of words |
| Dance | -- | keeping time to music | doing some or all of dance |
| Draw | indicating that activity is too hard or too easy, or that it's a skill already acquired | -- | asking for or getting materials; writing down or making other attempt to record or remember directions |
| How To | indicating that activity is too hard or too easy, or that it's a skill already acquired | -- | asking for or getting materials; writing down or making other attempt to record or remember directions |

## Examples of Coded Observer Descriptions

### Symphony

-1: "Oh no! Boom. How stupid."

0: In kitchen watching from there. "I'm still watching the show."
+1: "It's funny. "
+2: Hummed along with it

### Fitness

-1: (no negative responses coded)
0: Was not interested and started playing with her dog
+1: "Look they put OK instead of OJ", laughed
+2: Jogs with legs

### Riddle

-1: "Oh it's too easy. Mom, that one was dumb."
0: Just looks
+1: Laughed
+2: "Milk Shake"

### Faces

-1: Didn't understand the Scrambled Faces
0: Returned to room, sat down near TV
+1: "Oh! I've never seen this before."
+2: "Here's the part I like. That's Arnold!"

### Words

-1: Didn't like this part
0: Child watched quietly
+1: Rudy just looking & smiling sometimes & laughing
+2: "Honestly - On, To..."

### Dance

-1: "Snake Dance..it's stupid. Who wants to look like a snake? Hiss! Hiss!"
0: Child watched - no action
+1: Laughs at Fred dancing
+2: Dances with TV

### Draw

-1: "I don't need that. It's too many lines. I know how to draw already. I learned from art school."
0: Watched intently
+1: Answered "yes" to silly footprint & train
+2: Participating in activity (drawing hands)

How To

-1: "It wouldn't sound like that."
0: Sits back down and continues to watch TV screen. Picks up cup and drinks.
+1: "I wanna see that part."
+2: Left room to get items for Play Along

# Appendix M

## Comments From Family Observers About Play Alongs

- Comments from Observers of Younger Girls
- Comments from Observers of Younger Boys
- Comments from Observers of Older Girls
- Comments from Observers of Older Boys

# Comments from Observers

*Note*:

In some cases, parents observed more than one of their children for the Flintstones project. Comments from observers of two or three children were not included twice or thrice. This decision was made after reading both or all three sets of comments for such observers and realizing they were virtually identical. In cases where two children from the same sex-age groups were observed by the *same* person, observer comments for one of those children were deleted arbitrarily. In cases where two children from *different* sex-age groups were observed by the same person, observer comments for the child representing the sex-age group with the largest number of cases were deleted. This procedure was also followed in deleting comments for the one parent who observed three children, for two of her three children.

## Comments from Observers of Younger Girls

Child# 80, Mother

Some of the cartoon segments are too scary for young children. Ghosts and haunted houses are not appropriate viewing fare.

Child# 86, Mother

1. Buck Rogers was poor choice for scrambled face as he has no real distinguishing characteristic.
2. Symphony too short & too much like cartoon segment - Perhaps could show different instrument each week with live action shots giving detailed info on that particular instrument.
3. Riddle portion too vague - too much like cartoon segments. Should ask riddle directly to viewer then pause for answer or reaction.
4. Parent observer strongly prefers educational public service announcements to commercials, i.e. proper fit of bikes, physical fitness vs. sugar cereal or toy ad - Perhaps public service spot could have voice over tag "Brought to you by Kellogs - maker of sugar this, sugar that, sugar etc."
5. "How to" segment - observer did see or hear part directing child to get needed materials even though did not leave TV room. Imperative, materials must be easily & quickly available - Don't send child to garage for cardboard box which may be needed by family, i.e. bass instrument must be disassembled to use broom to sweep floor.
6. Scrambled word was done backwards - Should start with word HONESTY then take letters to make words. And beginning with a sentence is far too difficult a concept in short time frame.
7. News segment lost my child's attention completely perhaps it was time (1 hour) already spent watching TV. Subject matter should be something to which child can directly relate.
8. Dance - could be excellent if conveyed properly. First get child's attention - tell viewers first STAND UP. GET READY TO DANCE - and PLEASE, PLEASE DON'T TEACH MY CHILD SUCH THINGS AS "STICK OUT YOUR TONGUE" (see Feb. 14 show).
9. Captain Caveman can be eliminated quickly and completely. There is absolutely no place in children's programming for poor grammar, i.e. "Me not ask for that," "Me ask computer." I am appalled and infuriated - Besides he's dumb, ugly & unkempt. Sorry Capt. Caveman - stay in your cave, you're not a welcome guest in my home.
10. Drawing - again could be excellent concept but poorly executed - Again, parent observer did not catch instruction to get paper, pencil & ruler. Instruction needs to be simpler & slower. Show only one figure not 3 or 4 that child would not be able to draw anyway. By the time my child went to other side of room to get ruler (readily available I might add) the drawing instruction segment was over. Again cartoon character should talk directly to child viewer "If you want to learn to draw - go RIGHT NOW and get paper, pencil, ruler etc. so you'll be ready."

Child# 86, Mother (con't)

11. Before viewing show I felt Dance would be my daughter's favorite part as she always jumpos up and dances to any music especially commercial background rock music. However, dance portion did not get her attention from her tracing.
12. In summation I feel educational/participation segment concept is excellent and sounds terrific as described on paper. However, concept execution was extremely poor. They just did not come across airwaves as presented. Perhaps they need to be presented with more enthusiasm or incorporated into the cartoon itself, such as Pebbles learning new dance or Barney making musical instrument.

Child# 40, Mother

While the Play-Alongs themselves aren't paced too fast, they are presented in such a fragmented, sudden way that the child doesn't really have time to "shift gears" and get involved.

Child# 19, Mother

No comment given.

Child#01, Mother

The "Play-Alongs" seem like a good idea however they seem so diffused that a great deal of their value is lost.

The show that seemed to hold Heather's interest (she turned to it) was one continual story w/ commercial breaks. This suggests, to me, anyway that she is capable of a longer attention span & prefers not being continually interrupted. Also, I think a friend may have recently suggested the other show &/or part of a program habit.

I think the short segment approach is sort of annoying as it interrupts your train of thought. My daughter began to fidget, etc. I think longer more developed "Play-Alongs" would be an improvement, allowing children to develop, build & sustain interest in a topic.

We watch PBS (Sesame St., Electric Co., Mr. Rodgers) quite a bit. Although "Sesame St." uses a lot of short segments, there is a more cohesive approach, and each of the segments seem more fully developed. They develop a dialogue w/ children (in studio & at home). An example - your music segment was shown w/ no explanatory material or discussion of concept, relation to other activities children might be familiar with, etc.

I applaud your efforts to improve children's programming on network TV. Goold Luck!

Child# 53, Mother

I like the play-alongs. It teaches children something.

There could have been more instruction for the musical instruments (although my child got the idea).

Finding words was much much too fast.

**Child# 49, Father**

It seem like it was interesting. It was not too long where as the kids lost interest in the parts of the show.

**Child# 67, Mother**

The Flintstones Comedy Show is what I call "mindjunk". As with all other cartoon shows of its genre, it is insulting to the intelligence of its child audience. The content of the cartoons never deviates from a format of "getting even," aggression, & violence; where characters are flattened out; swallowed whole, regurgitated, put through presses, run over, blasted about by explosives and subjected to many other tortuous acts - only to spring back again in the next frame as though nothing had happened.

The Flintstone's is not a program that would help a child develop a sense of self worth, sensitivity, consideration of others or creativity. The play-along segments are a feeble attempt to provide some educational material - they are not distinguishable from the cartoons. And additionally one of the properties a cartoon show hopefully should provide is glaringly missing from the Flintstones - HUMOR! A show based on "doing each other in" is devoid of humor from my perspective. When my daughter brought the invitation to participate in this evaluation project home from school I initially thought we would not qualify because I did not think she had seen the Flintstones twice during the last few months. She doesn't watch Saturday morning cartoons at home but she had viewed the show a couple of times while staying the night with friends. So, I was interested in participating to see for myself what the Flintstones is really like (although, I really knew beforehand - it was bad).

**Child# 09, Mother**

My children do not watch much T.V. because most programs are of low quality. Some programs that are good are usually on later than their 8:00 PM bedtime.

**Child# 79, Mother**

The play-alongs are a good concept - however something is being lost in the translation. I think that, perhaps, they are not "broken out" of the program enough - for example you have just watched Pebbles in a cartoon, now she's narrating a play along dance + because she's a character for passive observation she doesn't instill action. Perhaps a "Play along action" character, distinctive from the rest - obviously different along the lines of Jiminy Crickett character would be more effective. Children will certainly play along - that's been demonstrated by Sesame St etc - but not with the format we observed. I think the original 2 observations would have given a more accurate assessment.

Personally I find the Flintstones to be a tired theme.

**Child# 13, Mother**

The play-alongs were nice. The cartoons didn't seem harmful or productive. We can find more productive and varied things for our girls to do on Sat. A.M.

**Child# 90, Mother**

I personally love "The Flinstones Comedy Show," have always love the Flinstones since I was a child and would have love to have play along with them. Play alongs are great and I have always love it and also the drawing & musical glasses it is so educational. This show is similar to Popeye which was my best because of the drawing and educational question and answer which was presented on that show. Now that the Flinstones are like that I would not get bored watching the same old reruns. Give your mind something to do beside just sitting there looking.

**Child# 75, Mother**

No comment given.

**Child# 084, Mother**

No comment given.

**Child# 4, Mother**

No comment given.

**Child# 39, Mother**

Sometimes there was insufficient lead time prior to actual play along. Perhaps there should be some type of brief announcement then a commercial and then the play along, this would prepare child for activities. My daughter seemed interested in the cartoon but doesn't normally watch the Flintstones on Saturday morning anymore. I believe the program has greater appeal to younger children.

**Child# 48, Mother**

I like the educational inserts (except that the ones on building things probably won't be applied). The type that drew Lori into them were the word ones (like "carnival") and "scrambled faces."

I myself got antsy watching the longer cartoons, and Lori started wiggling around a lot by the second or third one. I would shorten the cartoons and lengthen the word games and reinforce the educational parts. Lori just added that she really likes the scrambled faces. You could also teach the important social values, like the importance of being honest, the importance of being kind to others, the fact that boys and girls are equally important and capable, and that it's important to do your own personal best at things -- rather than just using the basic (i.e. old) sit-com material (like monster chasing teenagers). (Think I used the word, "important" frequently enough in that last sentence?) Also - as a person who works in "public relations," I have a comment on the "public relations" technique of the spots on "watching TV smart" (adding up front that I have not ever seen any of them). The way Lori described them to me, they might be worthwhile, like they suggest the child go play instead of watchin TV - but I myself think there is no such thing as "watching TV smart." I think TV dulls adults and children and that it should be carefully limited by parents of young children (1 hour a day for 6 days a week, mayb 1½ hours a day on one "special" day, and that the shows chosen are the ones that make some contribution to the child's moral perspective). Lori likes "Happy Days" and each show seems to include a moral about loyalty or honesty, but we only occasionally let her watch the usual crap that's on TV, like "Three's Company" or "Love Boat" or the insane garbage that is only used

Child# 48, Mother (con't)

for an excuse to plaster naked women in front of people (like "Charlie's Angels" and "Dukes of Hazzard"). (Lori just told me she's really seen "Dukes of Hazzard" about 10 times, so, now I will be more on the alert and make sure she doesn't watch it so much.) In general, we try to control the shows Lori watches (so that they're either educational or convey some values) and we use TV for relaxing. I also think commercials for the sugar cereals should be taken off the air (like cigarette comcl's and liquor comcl's).

Personally, (I would also like to get in a good word for abortions myself.) Getting a little hysterial here after watching those cartoons. P.S. Thank you for doing this research. I hope it results in a greater emphasis on the educational and ethical (teaching good values) possibilities of TV.

Child# 77, Mother

The play alongs are certainly a welcome addition to the monotony of cartoon viewing. It is also somewhat a comfort to know that NBC and other networks are concerned with children and the way they view television. Included in their concern are the "parental discretion" warnings before certain shows, however, on weekdays, at 5:00pm there are no such warnings. My children do understand the difference between make believe and reality, but with the horror of the network's news broadcast. How about just an 11:00 report. I'm never home at 5:00.

## Comments from Observers of

## Younger Boys

Child# 60, Mother

I like the Play-Alongs. They turn passive cartoon watching into active participation.

Child# 41, Mother

I think longer segments maybe more beneficial to help them have longer attention spans. I think the play alongs are good and the information is well paced but a special segment might be better for a longer time and tell the children what materials they may need. I didn't really like the riddles. My child didn't understand them. The symphony was the right length, and I like the exposure to this kind of music for my child. I like the play-alongs because they at least try to involve the child in some sort of interaction rather than just passively watching the cartoons. I think NBC is trying to improve and I like that.

Child# 89, Mother

I have greater concern how programming affects my 2½ yr. old, as he doesn't understand how to watch TV as my 7 yr. old does. He is more visibly active in doing what the characters or programs tell or show him to do. I was glad that it didn't contain a lot of the violence that most other cartoons contain.

The dance segment was too difficult and rapid - yet, the only one my son tried to do. It needs to be simplified and lengthened to have a positive effect.

Child# 63, Mother

The play alongs which the children can do such as the dance or drawing circles and squares are best. But, they should be warned a few minutes before that such a play along is coming & they should get the materials ready.

Child# 62, Mother

No comment given.

Child# 11, Mother

I, myself, found some of the Play-Alongs boring and others too fast paced. I believe Scott was bored with the show.

Child# 69, Mother

I think the Flintstones Comedy Hour is a very good idea. My son sat through the entire program with very few interruptions & I thought he absorbed pretty much information. When we did the child's questionnaire after the program I noticed some of the segements he had confused. So by my observation & opinion some segements are shown too fast. When I asked my son about this he says it's the "right speed" but his questionaire proves they're too fast for him. I really wish there were some programs on the air such as yours. Thank you for letting us participate we both enjoyed it and I found it very interesting.

Child# 14, Mother

I think that The Flintstones Comedy Show is a good program for kids, except that there should be less commercials about cereal products. It also should have a little more excitement in the show.

Child# 29, Mother

I don't know where my son got the idea he had to sit & watch TV and do nothing else. (May be he's confusing this with what he should do at school.) I feel it is better to color, draw, do puzzles & exercise while a program is going on and as my observations showed in reality he certainly didn't sit still & do nothing but watch T.V. The "play-alongs" are a good idea to initiate other activity and creativeness.

Child# 28, Mother

Play-Alongs may be more valuable if information on required materials is given with time allowed for child to get them together.

Child# 44, Parent

I think this show is awful - trite, boring, full of cliches, put-downs stereotypes, racially unbalanced - not enough minorities.

There are take-offs on things only adults can remember or understand. They give a blatantly false picture of history, are extremely unoriginal & consist of plots & ideas borrowed from other shows, literature etc.

The commercials are about useless junk & junk-food & show bad taste and false representation. They do not show anything I'd let my kids have & I discourage watching most T.V. anyway.

Child# 82, Mother

No comment given.

Child# 34, Father

It isn't obvious that the child is expected to run out for materials during the TV show.

The play-along segments are so short (and lack any form of introduction) that they easily can be missed. My children watched the play-alongs but didn't understand that they should participate.

The Saturday show is chopped into too many segments. My children enjoy watching the weekday version more.

Child# 59, Sister

No comment given.

Child# 95, Mother

No comment given.

Child# 87, Mother

No comment given

Child# 65, Father

1. 1½ hours seems like too long. Towards the end Matthew was more easily distracted & not as involved.
2. The Play-alongs are a fine idea; however, some repetition might be useful. For example, more information on Ben Franklin or more detail on the "How to." The dancing & music parts seemed the least useful & interesting.

Child# 65, Father (con't.)

3. The cartoons seem so mindless. How about working riddles & problem solving (simple math or clues requiring deductive reasoning) into the stories. Make them entertaining, but at least attempt to stimulate some thought.

## Comments from Observers of

## Older Girls

Child# 46, Mother

Thank you for allowing us to participate in this research project.

I would like to see the Flintstone Show cut to 1 hr. using the existing Play-Alongs but extending them 1-2 minutes giving more explicit directions to enable the younger child 5-7 years to be able to participate more. The Play-Alongs seem to be suited for my 9 yr. old - Mary - Bethel but not detailed enough for my 6 year old - Martha.

The safety tips are very valuable and I also liked the news briefs using children and their questions.

The existing 1½ hr. program seems a bit long even for my 9 yr. old - my six year old lost interest after the first two cartoons. That's why I feel one hour would be sufficient.

Child# 32, Sister

No comment at all it was a very good show to watch.

Child# 5, Mother

1. Directions should be slower and stated clearly.
2. If materials are to be needed for a drawing segment, perhaps announce that those materials will be needed so child will have a chance to participate. (For example drawing hand segments) the segment was presented quickly - no materials available to participate.

Child# 76, Father

This program is excellent - Don't stop producing it, because my daughter would be heart broken.

Child# 35, Mother

My feeling is that since the majority of children are glued to the T.V. set on a Saturday morning, it is beneficial to have educational/play-along segments.

Child# 12, Mother

My child is easily distracted from the television. She therefore does not readily concentrate on the contents of the program. Her span of attention is from about 5-10 minutes.

Child# 33, Stepfather

I think the Play-Alongs were pretty good, except some of the jokes are pretty corny.

I also think if you really want kids to watch The Flintstones Comedy Show that you should advertise it alot. And when you do advertise it you should pretend like its the best show in the world. (Kind of like "Dallas" advertises.)

I also thought this was pretty neat interviewing my daughter.

Child# 70, Mother

The transition from the passive watching of the cartoons to a more active involvement with the Play-Alongs is too abrupt. The "How to . . . ." don't give the child any time to gather materials.

The cartoons are a vast improvement over the old Flintstones I remember. Until this project I had never really sat down to watch them, nor was I even aware there were Play-Alongs. The concept is a valuable one, but the presentation may dilute that value.

Child# 64, Mother

No comment given.

Child# 43, Parents

The idea of combining a little learning along with the cartoon is good.

Child# 45, Mother

I think the play alongs are very good for the children, they cannot only watch but participate without getting tired of watching cartoons. The whole program is a very good one.

Child# 25, Mother

Too many commercials! Not enough learning, educational type materials.

Child# 47, Mother

No comment given.

Child# 02, Mother

I found that things were going a little too fast especially in the areas where little or no comments were made on the activity sheet. At times the Flintstones Comedy Show didn't hold my attention not as well as it did Claressa's. I am not a great TV fan anyway. I seldomly sit down to watch anything.

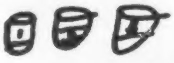
The play-alongs were nice, however the Public Service Announcements and station breaks completely missed me.

I don't believe that I was able to observe the TV and Claressa both at the same time and write well enough to give adequate evaluation.

Claressa enjoyed the entire 1½ hrs. quite well.

Child# 03, Mother

Example of Play Along:

1. Get 3 glasses of water fill each like this 
   Stay Tuned For Next Step
2. After several segments release the child's curiousity by telling him to get the pencils and play him a tune 𝄞 : 123 & 321. Explain how each glass is a musical note and give pictures and examples of how real musicians use large barrels & cans to make real instruments.

Child# 55, Mother

I, myself, prefer the old Flintstone Show. This show has so many commercials, it is unbelievable.

Child# 72, Mother

I think the play alongs are a terrific idea. As a rule they really capture my children's attention, even the younger ones. I think they should be repeated more than once. Sometimes they miss part of them or the items they need not handy so they can't do it along with them or while its fresh in their minds.

Child# 96, Mother

An hour-and-a-half cartoon program is too long. The child becomes bored and absorbs nothing in the last half-hour. The word segment was very good but presented much too fast. The news segments was too involved for the younger group who would watch a cartoon show.

Child# 93, Mother

I think they need to know about people more and everyday life it alright to play games but that what children's do all the time, it should be something such as: teaching more about life and what may happen in everyday life. About Mother and Father what they are: Who they are, Respect for school, teacher others, etc. And about writing on walls at school etc., hanging around wrong children etc. I think it should be more realistic.

## Comments from Observers of
## Older Boys

Child# 26, Father & Mother

No comment given.

Child# 57, Father

I had a hard time telling when it was a commercial and when it was a break for a riddle or other activity. Maybe a clearer beginning segment or distinguishing action to separate them.
The play along with water glasses I wouldn't let my child do in the room the TV is in. The kitchen maybe but not the den.
My son thought the dance along was pretty dumb. I thought it was cute though!
I thought the cartoons were the shows strong point and the Ask NBC news was very good also.

Child# 08, Mother

No comment given.

Child# 58, Mother

I think that this is a worthwhile project. It was interesting for me to participate. Before today I had never really watched a Saturday morning cartoon show. The Flintstones Comedy Show seems to be a very good show. However, after watching I would think that it would be geared towards children in the age group of 5 to 8 yrs. Both my children stated that they very seldom watch NBC on Saturday mornings because they had seen most of the show before except The Flintstone Comedy Show. Could this be because of their ages, 10 and 12?!?

Child# 54, Mother

Your program is a good idea but not as wide reaching in age as would be liked.

Child# 68, Mother

More informative material needed as respects, getting along well with others, not being selfish (interest in one's self only). Other children in other places, encouragement for reading enjoyment like an introduction to children's books and a skit with a follow-up next 2 weeks or so. Making of Mathematics as an enjoyable connection with everyday concerns.

Child# 92, Mother

In the Flintstones cartoons women are depicted in a very negative way. They are inactive and ineffectual or just plain stupid. For example, in the "Gold Rush" cartoon Wilma and Betty stay at camp cooking while the men go off on active pursuits. In the Captain Caveman cartoon Betty admits to being even more confused than usual and also says "Who'd ever believe you are Capt. Caveman?" to Capt. Caveman with glasses. The two "Home Beautiful" women in the dino and Cavemouse cartoon are not just stupid they are also made to look ridiculous. Women need men to get them out of trouble (Betty - "Capt. Caveman will save us!", when water is filling up room) or have to wheedle men to get what they want (Pebbles to Bambam). Is this any kind of role model for little girls?

Child# 07, Mother

Definitely geared for younger children around 6 yrs.

Child# 38, Mother

The last question I asked Guy about ways to watch TV.
Often the suggestion is made about watchin TV w/ parents.
He did not seem to understand that this is a good way to watch TV.
I let him watch lots of variety because there is someone there to answer questions for him that arise.

Child# 49, Mother

I enjoyed this survey. My child is so involved in TV I would like to see more educational parts instead of so much cartoons. He needs to learn from TV since he watches so much of it. I'd prefer him to get a learning edge from TV as he is somewhat slow & could use the help.

Child# 66, Mother

No comment given.

Child# 18, Mother

The finding word section went a little too fast for much comprehension to take place other than just to notice that the word recreation was made up of a lot of words which were related. The other sections were fine.

Child# 56, Mother

No comment given.

Child# 10, Mother

No comment given.

Child# 23, Mother

No comment given.

Child# 6, Mother

The dance the girl does is kind of weird. Kissing and sticking out her tongue.

Child# 16, Sister

Some Play-Alongs are too babyish.

# Appendix N

## Researcher's Questionnaire for Pilot Study About How Children Think and Feel About Prosocial Programming

NAME ______________________________ Sex ____________

Age ______________________________ School/Program ______________________

I would like to ask you some questions about programs you may have watched on television. I'll also ask you some more questions about the program you just saw, Drawing Power. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers. I'm only interested in how kids like you think and feel about television programs like Drawing Power.

A. 1. You know, there are different kinds of children's programs on TV. What kind of program would you call Drawing Power?

2. Tell me the one kind of program Drawing Power is most like. Is it most like

   a. the news or programs about current events

   b. programs that teach you something important

   c. programs that are just for fun

3. How is Drawing Power like __________________ ? (Insert type circled in #2)

4. How is Drawing Power different from ___________________ ? (Insert type not circled in #2)

5. How is Drawing Power different from ___________________ ? (Insert other type not circled in #2

6. Whose idea do you think it is to put shows like Drawing Power on television for kids?

   (PROBES: Parents? Teachers? Kids? The people who make the program?)

7. Why do you think these people (persons named in #6) want shows like Drawing Power to be on TV?

   (PROBE: What's another reason?) (Use especially if child says something like "So that kids can see it.")

8. How do you know when a television program has something important to teach you or if it's a program that's just for fun?

   (PROBES: Characters? Real/pretend? Your feelings about it?)

9. You know that grown-ups and children have feelings. Some names of feelings are happy, sad, and mad. Can you tell me, do you watch any programs that are about people's feelings?

10. Have you ever watched shows about a family like Brady Bunch or Eight is Enough?

    How often?

11. Have you ever watched the special kind of show that is on TV afterschool or on Saturday or Sunday morning? It can be called ABC Afterschool Special or ABC Weekend Special or NBC Special Treat.

    (PROBE: These programs often tell a story about a child your age and a problem he/she may be having with his/her family or friends or at school. The program usually tells how the child works the problem out.)

    How often?

IF POSITIVE RESPONSE TO #10 OR #11, CONTINUE ASKING ABOUT EITHER FAMILY SHOWS OR SPECIALS (IN THAT ORDER). OTHERWISE SKIP TO NEXT SECTION (PAGE 3).

12. Do you like programs like ________________ ? (Family shows or specials)

13. Why do you like/don't like these programs?

14. What would you say you learn from the programs like ________________ ?

    (Family shows or specials)

15. Do you learn (things mentioned in #14) anywhere else?

    (PROBLES: In school? From parents? Talking with brothers or sisters? Friends?)

16. Do you remember any special feelings that you have had when you watched programs like ________________ ? (Family shows or specials)

    (PROBE: Are your feelings stronger when you watch these shows than when you watch other shows?)

QUESTIONS #17-18 OPTIONAL. ASK ONLY IF INTERVIEW LESS THAN 10 MINUES TO THIS POINT. OTHERWISE SKIP TO NEXT SECTION (PACE 3).

17. When you see kids on programs like (family shows or specials) who may be having a problem with their families or friends or at school, does this ever make you think of problems you may have had with your families or friends or at school?

    Give an example.

18. Do programs like (family shows or specials) ever give you ideas for "solving problems" or "getting along with people" that you can try to use with your friends or families or friends or at school?

    Give me an example.

ASK QUESTIONS IN EITHER SECTIONS B, C OR D (ASK FIRST SUBJECT QUESTIONS FROM SECTION B, SECOND SUBJECT QUESTIONS FROM SECTION C, THIRD SUBJECT SECTION D, THEN REPEAT)

B. Superperson U (FOOTAGE: 000-089)

1. Can you tell me what you think the part about Super Shoes and Spike was all about?

2. Would you say that you liked this part of the program?

   Why/Why not?

3. Do you remember how you felt about Spike before Super Shoes gave him his bully shoes?

   How was that?

   Why did you feel that way about him?

4. Do you remember how you felt about the little boy with Spike when Spike was twisting his arm?

   How was that?

   Why did you feel that way about him?

5. Did you have any feelings about Super Shoes?

   What were they?

   Why did you feel that way?

6. Did you have any other feelings about this part of the program?

   What were they?

   Why did you feel that way?

7. Did you feel that this part of the program was just for fun or did it have something important to teach kids like you?

   How could you tell?

8. Do you think you'll ever think about Spike and Super Shoes again?
   When?
   Why?

C. Turkey of the Week (FOOTAGE: 090-149)

1. Can you tell me what you think Turkey of the Week was all about?

2. Would you say that you liked this part of the program?
   Why/Why not?

3. Do you remember how you felt about Dirty Harry?
   How was that?
   Why did you feel that way about him?

4. Did you have any other feelings about Turkey of the Week?
   What were they?
   Why did you feel that way?

5. Did you feel that this part of the program was just for fun or did it have something important to teach kids like you?
   How could you tell?

6. Do you think you'll ever think about Dirty Harry again?
   When?
   Why?

D. McDonald's Commercial (FOOTAGE: 150-170)

1. Can you tell me what that commercial was all about?
   (PROBE: What was the story of the boy meant to be about?)

2. Would you say that you liked this commercial?
   Why/Why not?

3. Do you remember how you felt about the boy who had to move?

   How was that?

   Why did you feel that way about him?

4. Did you have any other feelings about the commercial?

   What were they?

   Why did you feel that way?

5. Did you feel that this commercial was just for fun or did it have something important to teach kids like you?

   (Probe for message besides the obvious commercial one to buy McDonald's hamburgers.)

6. Do you think you'll ever think about the boy in the commercial?

   When?

   Why?